

12-2008

An Investigation of Faculty Knowledge and Perceptions Toward College Students with Reading and Writing Difficulties

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AN INVESTIGATION OF FACULTY KNOWLEDGE AND PERCEPTIONS
TOWARD COLLEGE STUDENTS WITH READING AND WRITING
DIFFICULTIES

A Dissertation

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies and Research

in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

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December 2008

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Academically vulnerable students are becoming a larger than expected component in college classrooms across the country (Perin, 2006; Spann, 2000). These students often show poor performance on class assignments and exams due to a lack of reading and writing skills at a level needed to succeed in a college classroom. Support centers and tutoring services are not equipped to handle the increased volume of academically vulnerable students nor the types of needs these students demand, causing the responsibility to shift more heavily to faculty.

This research focused on examining the knowledge and perceptions of college faculty as they relate to working with college students who struggle with reading and writing. The ultimate objective for this investigation is to ascertain college faculty's ability to recognize the characteristics of academically vulnerable students and to offer assistance that meets the needs of this unique population.

To assess the knowledge and perceptions that college faculty have toward working with academically vulnerable students, faculty from six colleges and universities in northwestern Pennsylvania responded to an electronic survey.

Data from the survey were analyzed using frequency and Chi Square statistical analysis. Qualitative data were analyzed using inductive analysis.

Findings of the study indicate that gaps exist between faculty perceptions of their role in working with academically vulnerable students and the implementation of the assistance needed by this student population.

Recommendations focus on increasing and improving the professional development opportunities for faculty offered by higher education institutions.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to express sincere appreciation for my committee: Dr. George R. Bieger, my chairperson, who patiently replied to literally hundreds of emails and helped me stay on track. He saw my vision. It was through his guidance in both the topic creation and the writing that I was able to complete this work. Dr. Susan Fello and Dr. Anne Creany, my wonderful committee members, without whose guiding words and gentle criticisms I could not have persevered. Dr. Christoph Maier from the Applied Research Lab at IUP, and Dana Reed from StudentVoice have my gratitude for their guidance and support throughout the data gathering and analysis. In addition, I would like to offer an extra special thank you to Dr. Diane Bourque and Dr. Tara Joyce for their willingness to share their work with me and for offering me permission to use their studies. A heartfelt thank you goes out to Lisa Tong and Karen Tyler for their roles as “silent readers” and emotional cheerleaders.

It is with deep appreciation that I say thank you to my mother and grandmother...never has there been two stronger women. It was through their example and encouragement that I learned I could do anything to which I set my mind.

Most of all, I could not have made this journey without the love, support, and understanding of my family: son Bob (my inspiration), daughter Christina (my confidante and editing partner), and husband David (my sounding board and helpmate)...to them I owe everything.

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CHAPTER 1

THE PROBLEM

The transition between high school and college can be difficult for any student, but it can be overwhelming for students with learning disabilities and academically vulnerable students who struggle with reading and writing. The advanced skill requirements and increased pacing of college can pose major barriers to students who may have struggled with reading and writing in high school or simply did not develop sufficient background skills before entering postsecondary education (Scherer, 2007; Conley, 2007; McKeachie, 2006; Huse, Wright, Clark & Hacker, 2005). Statistically, only 51 percent of students taking the ACT scored at a level high enough to indicate readiness for college level reading, constituting the lowest percentage in the last twelve years (ACT.org, 2006).

It has been estimated that 25-30 percent of all students enrolling in college are underprepared for the demands of higher education (Perin, 2006; Spann, 2000). In the past, many academically at-risk students were traditionally steered toward enrollment in community colleges (Bauman, 2006; Moore, 2004). According to Spann (2000), the number of community college students needing some remediation ranges from 30-90 percent. Although a large majority of academically at-risk students still enroll in community colleges, it is estimated that a quarter of all students attending four-year postsecondary institutions will have a “challenge significant enough to impair their success if not compensated

for or corrected” (Spann, 2000, p. 2). For the purposes of this study, these students will be referred to as academically vulnerable.

Academically vulnerable students offer a unique challenge since they arrive to college without documentation indicating a specific disability or need, do not self-disclose in most cases, and thus are not receiving the accommodations and modifications associated with a disability. These students are frequently classified as underprepared, but are capable of succeeding with assistance (Huse, Wright, Clark & Hacker, 2005). Unfortunately, the academically vulnerable student may not know how to request assistance and some faculty who have limited knowledge in teaching strategies for academically vulnerable students are unaware that these students are experiencing difficulty, what assistance is needed, or how to implement different strategies (Vogel, Burgstahler, Sligar, & Zecker, 2006; Johnson, 2006; Beck & Davidson, 2001; Jacob, Wadlington, & Bailey, 1998).

Research indicates that the increase in academically vulnerable students who are enrolling in higher education has grown beyond the scope of the tutoring centers on campus (Huse, Wright, Clark & Hacker, 2005; Donnelly, 2000), thus requiring faculty to be capable of addressing the needs of students enrolled in their classrooms (Perin, 2006; Foushee & Sleight, n.d.).

Statement of the Problem

This study is based on the premise that more students who are academically vulnerable in reading and writing, as well as those diagnosed with reading disabilities, such as dyslexia, are entering higher education (Doering,

2003; Ruzic, 2001; Jacob, Wadlington, & Bailey, 1998). The National Center of Education Statistics in 2000 estimated that 9.3 percent of all post-secondary undergraduates have some form of disability (as cited in Vogel, Burgstahler, Sligar, & Zecker, 2006). In addition to an influx of students with documented disabilities, there are also more academically vulnerable students enrolling in colleges and universities (Foushee & Sleigh, n.d.). and it is important to ascertain how well prepared college faculty are in dealing with the unique challenges these students bring to the collegiate classroom (Lavoie, 2005; Perin, 2006; Doering, 2003; Ruzic, 2001; Spann, 2000; Ediger, 2001).

The increased amount and higher intensity of reading required at the postsecondary level can be an obstacle to academically vulnerable students and students with reading disabilities, thus putting them at a distinct disadvantage (Ediger, 2001). However, this does not mean that academically vulnerable students cannot be successful (Doering, 2003; Moore, 2004). In order for this population of students to be successful, faculty must be trained to identify and address a wide range of needs including the ability to read more effectively from college level text (McKeachie, 2006). Rooney (2007) addresses the issue clearly in his statement, "Just as student learning depends on the expertise of teachers, the expertise of teachers depends on the quality of their professional development" (p. 87).

The benefits of in-service faculty professional development, including increased knowledge and improved attitudes, have been documented (Scott & Gregg, 2000) yet there is little research examining the extent to which faculty are

prepared, or consider it part of their professional responsibility to work with students who are academically vulnerable and at risk for failure. Academically vulnerable students are a high risk population for dropping out after the first year of college (Heisserer & Parette, 2002; National On-Campus Report, 2005). In order to increase the achievement and retention rate of academically vulnerable students, collegiate faculty need to be able to recognize the characteristics of a struggling student and know how to assist them to ensure they are successful (Johnson, 2006; Recruitment & Retention in Higher Education, 2005).

It is the purpose of this research to address these issues by investigating the professional development requirements of postsecondary educators by examining faculty knowledge and perceptions toward working with vulnerable college students who are experiencing reading and writing difficulties.

Implications of this study may inform colleges and universities about the need to increase professional development for faculty focused on issues of working with academically vulnerable students who experience reading and writing difficulties (Spann, 2000).

Questions to be Researched

This study will seek to answer the following main research question:

Are college faculty adequately prepared to offer assistance to academically vulnerable students who experience reading and writing difficulties?

This study will seek to answer the following sub-questions:

1. To what extent do college faculty believe they are responsible for assisting vulnerable students who experience reading and writing difficulties?
2. To what extent do college faculty feel they are prepared to offer assistance to academically vulnerable students who experience reading and writing difficulties?
3. To what extent are college faculty adequately prepared to identify the characteristics of an academically vulnerable student who experiences reading and writing difficulties?
4. To what extent do differences in gender, discipline, or years of experience in higher education impact attitude or willingness to offer assistance to students with reading and writing difficulties?

Hypotheses

The purpose of this study is to add to the current body of knowledge concerning the professional development requirements of postsecondary educators by examining faculty member's knowledge and perceptions toward working with academically vulnerable college students who are experiencing reading and writing difficulties.

The researcher hypothesizes that post-secondary faculty do believe that they have a responsibility to assist academically vulnerable students experiencing reading and writing difficulties.

The researcher hypothesizes that post-secondary faculty perceive their preparation in how to work with academically vulnerable students has been

inadequate and would be amenable to further professional development in this area.

Significance of the Research

Every student should have a fair and equal opportunity to be successful in pursuing educational goals. The fundamental gatekeepers of success are the faculty under whose tutelage these students are learning. Moore (2004) discusses the “disregard and contempt for underprepared, academically at-risk students” as being a widespread belief of college faculty and administration (p. 30).

This research will focus on examining the knowledge and perceptions of college faculty as they relate to working with academically vulnerable students who struggle with reading and writing. This study will utilize an electronic survey consisting of nine demographic, 16 Likert-scale style, and five open-ended questions. Twelve colleges and universities in northwestern Pennsylvania will be invited to participate. Each survey returned will be evaluated in reference to the participant’s perception of their responsibilities and preparedness in working with academically vulnerable students. These data will then be compared to current literature on professional development opportunities available to postsecondary educators.

Definition of Terms

Academically Vulnerable - students who display poor performance on class assignments and exams and whose performance may be inconsistent though they attend class regularly and desire to be successful

Accommodation – any technique that alters the academic setting or environment, such as using a tape recorder to answer test questions (Jacob, Wadlington & Bailey, 1998).

At-risk students – college students “who are socially, financially, or academically underprepared or under supported” (Vivian, 2005, p. 336).

Dyslexia - a specific learning disability that is neurological in origin. It is characterized by difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities. These difficulties typically result from a deficit in the phonological component of language that is often unexpected in relation to other cognitive abilities and the provision of effective classroom instruction. Secondary consequences may include problems in reading comprehension and reduced reading experience that can impede growth of vocabulary and background knowledge (International Dyslexia Association).

Disability - A physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of such individual; A record of such an impairment; or being regarded as having such an impairment (defined by the American Disabilities Act).

Modification – any technique that alters the required work in some way such as reducing the number of problems required for completion during a specified time limit (Louisiana State Department as quoted in Jacob, Wadlington & Bailey, 1998).

Underprepared – students defined as those “whose previous educational experiences have not, for a variety of reasons, sufficiently prepared them for the

college level reading, critical thinking, and writing required of them from their first semester in college” (Huse, et al., 2005, p. 30).

Limitations

This study is limited to a convenience sample population from 12 colleges and universities in the northwestern section of Pennsylvania; thus the ability to generalize to the entire population of Pennsylvania and other states is limited.

The use of an electronic format may cause some faculty who are less technologically-literate to decline to participate.

Because the focus of this study is on professor’s self-reflections about their own personal teaching style and pedagogical beliefs, some faculty may be reluctant to participate. Whenever participants are self-reporting, a few participants may use the opportunity to vent personal complaints, while others may feel obligated to give the "right" answer, thus there is concern that responses may not be completely candid.

This study was delivered in late April. For most faculty members, this is a difficult and busy time as the scoring of research papers and final exams is underway. Thus, the timing of this study must be considered a limitation.

Summary

More students with disabilities are entering college than ever before (Vogel, Burgstahler, Sligar, & Zecker, 2006; Conley, 2007; Johnson, 2006; Doering, 2003; Ruzic, 2001). In 2000, the International Dyslexia Association declared that 85 percent of the population with a reading disability has dyslexia. According to Foushee & Sleigh (n.d.), students with reading disabilities typically

exhibit “difficulty studying, taking notes, asking questions, managing time, setting goals, and actively learning” as well as have “poor reasoning abilities and critical thinking deficits” (para 5).

The advanced skill requirements and increased pace of college level learning can pose major barriers to academically vulnerable students who either struggled with reading and writing in high school or simply did not develop sufficient background skills before entering postsecondary education (Scherer, 2007; Conley, 2007; McKeachie, 2006; Huse, Wright, Clark & Hacker, 2005; Heisserer & Parette, 2002). This includes students with diagnosed disabilities, academically vulnerable students who may suffer from weak or underdeveloped reading and writing skills, or an undiagnosed reading disability. Presentation of these difficulties may take the form of slow reading, weak vocabulary, lower processing speed, and limited memory capacity. These students may have difficulty taking notes, processing auditory and written information, and have poor handwriting and spelling skills.

Boyd (2007) stresses that all faculty who teach in higher education today will have academically vulnerable and dyslexic students in their classrooms. Providing professional development for faculty in how to support these students must be a high priority for postsecondary institutions. This study will add to the current collection of scholarly work focused on the level of preparedness and subsequent attitudes of postsecondary educators who teach academically vulnerable students.

In the next chapter, a comprehensive review of the relevant empirical and theoretical literature that supports this research will be provided.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The literature reviewed in this chapter examines three issues significant to this study. First, the characteristics and needs of academically vulnerable and dyslexic adult learners will be identified to provide an understanding of its impact on learning at the postsecondary level. Secondly, the attitude of college faculty will be discussed as it relates to the instruction of academically vulnerable and dyslexic adult learners. Lastly, the current methods of professional development and best practices available for college faculty will be reviewed. For the purpose of this study, the terms *academically vulnerable* and *underprepared* refer to students struggling with the reading and writing requirements of higher education. These are students who display similar behaviors as those typically called “at-risk” such as poor performance on class assignments and exams and whose performance may be inconsistent though they attend class regularly and desire to be successful (Foushee & Sleigh, n.d.). Academically vulnerable also includes the characteristics of *academically disadvantaged* college students who are often dependent learners displaying low self-concept, deficiency in basic skills are hesitant to seek support (Heisserer & Parette, 2002).

The climate of post-secondary education has evolved over the last few decades with students becoming more aware of their need to acquire a higher education in order to be competitive in today’s global economy (Conley, 2007). It is estimated that obtaining a college education is the goal of 88 percent of today’s students (Venezia & Kirst, 2005). Unfortunately, many of these students

are not prepared for the academic level that higher education requires. Vivian (2005) likened their first year college experience to “entering an alien culture” (p. 338). This situation is exacerbated by a distinct disconnect between the preparation many high school students receive and the expectations for preparedness of colleges (Venezia & Kirst, 2005). A 1999 study, which compared the assessments found in high schools and the requirements of higher education, “found that high school tests, by and large, were geared to a much lower level than either college admissions or placement exams” (Olson , 2001, p. 17). Reading passages were generally nonacademic requiring personal reflection or reaction, and math requirements were at the Algebra 1 and Geometry levels.

Transitioning from a high school to a collegiate environment can pose obstacles for even the most academically prepared students. However, today it is not uncommon for academically vulnerable students to pursue a four-year degree alongside their more traditionally prepared counterparts. In fact, there are more academically vulnerable students enrolling in colleges and universities than ever before (Foushee & Sleigh, n.d.). Demonstrating this trend, data collected from the ACT college entrance exam shows that just 51 percent of students taking the ACT scored at a level high enough to indicate readiness for college level reading. This is the lowest percentage in the last twelve years (ACT.org, 2006). Students face further struggles with the demands of higher education in the areas of reading, writing, and math (Perin, 2004).

Students who struggle in the areas of reading, writing, and math are often referred to as being at-risk or underprepared. Vivian (2005) describes at-risk

students as “those who are socially, financially, or academically underprepared or under supported” (p. 336). Huse, Wright, Clark, & Hacker (2005) describe underprepared students as those “whose previous educational experiences have not, for a variety of reasons, sufficiently prepared them for the college level reading, critical thinking, and writing required of them from their first semester in college” (p. 30). In a study at Paradise Valley Community College, Dr. Sally Rings (2001) interviewed 20 faculty members concerning their perceptions of underprepared students. Based on the synthesis of these interviews, Dr. Rings concluded that students who are not ready for college, thus defined as “underprepared” are so due to inadequate general content knowledge; inability to read, write, or compute college level material; poor study skills, particularly in the areas of time management, organization and categorization of information; inability to think logically and critically; and an unrealistic expectation of college requirements (Rings, 2001).

In addition to academically underprepared students, the number of students with disabilities entering college is higher than ever before (Foley, 2006). Notably, students with learning disabilities are the “largest and fastest growing group” of this population (Burgstahler & Doe, 2006, p. 135). This may be a direct result of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (Scott & Gregg, 2000; Johnson, 2006). These Acts ensured that people with disabilities would not be discriminated against because of their disability. This included the admittance and treatment of students in both public and private education institutions (Scott & Gregg, 2000).

Further compounding the problem, Ruzic (2001) states that “80% of all identified learning disabilities (LDs) are estimated to be reading-related influencing students’ abilities to access and comprehend written materials” (p. 3). It is further estimated that of the 15-20 percent of the general public with a reading-related disability, 85 percent have dyslexia (International Dyslexia Association, 2000).

Considering the propensity of higher education institutions and faculty to rely on a reading-heavy curriculum, students who struggle in this area are at a distinct disadvantage and it is critical that the characteristics of these students be investigated (Conley, 2007; Ediger, 2001; Tucker, 2007). Identifying the characteristics of academically vulnerable students could lead to the development of instructional strategies to help support students in these courses.

Characteristics and Needs of Dyslexic and Academically Vulnerable Adult Learners

Dyslexia is a specific learning disability which impedes a student’s fluency, spelling, vocabulary development, and the overall reading comprehension of written material (International Dyslexia Association, 2000). It is not the result of low intelligence or cognitive ability (Miller-Shaul, 2005; Shaywitz, 2003; Hatcher, Snowling, & Griffiths, 2002). Dyslexics struggle to process and store inputted information (Doering, 2003). This causes lower processing speed, reduced memory capacity for oral and written language, lack of fluency, decreased vocabulary, slow reading, and reading fatigue, (Shaywitz, 2003; Hatcher, Snowling, & Griffiths, 2002; Gregg, Hoy, Flaherty, Norris, Coleman, Davis, & Jordan, 2005).

These findings are supported in a study by Hatcher, Snowling, & Griffiths (2002) in which a group of dyslexic college students were compared to a control group of students without a history of reading difficulty. Both groups were assessed using a range of tests that measured their skills in the areas of cognition, literacy, cognitive processing, numerical abilities, phonological skills, fluency, and writing tasks. Results indicated that “dyslexics took on average 24 percent longer to write” and “64 percent longer to read a passage” (p. 131). In addition, this study found that although “dyslexic students did not differ in overall cognitive ability” (p. 130), the abilities of students in the areas specifically focusing on reading (phonological analysis and decoding, reading speed, fluency, spelling, short-term memory) were weaker than those of the control group.

It is not uncommon for both academically vulnerable and dyslexic adults to have had difficulties during their elementary and high school years, which can result in a less than optimal foundation in reading skills (Ediger, 2001). The fast pace and high intensity of the college environment (Scherer, 2007) along with the extensive amount of reading in the postsecondary curriculum (Ediger, 2001) often contribute to the struggle vulnerable and dyslexic college students experience (Maloney, 2003; Scherer, 2007). There is speculation that academically vulnerable and dyslexic students “might not have been exposed to the same literacy experiences as their normally achieving peers” (Gregg, Hoy, Flaherty, Norris, Coleman, Davis, & Jordan, 2005, p. 13). Thus, academically vulnerable and dyslexic students may find college reading arduous due to limited

familiarity with the complex language, vocabulary, and text structure of the advanced material (Maloney, 2003; Moats, 2002).

Compounding this issue is the fact that college students are not required to disclose a disability such as dyslexia, making it difficult for faculty to discern if a student is struggling with the reading and writing requirements because of a disability or because they are academically underprepared. Additionally, adult students who have struggled with reading and writing for years regularly exhibit low self-esteem, self-efficacy, and self-worth (Shaywitz, 2003; Moats, 2002). This may lead to a desire not to announce their difficulties publicly. Johnson (2006) reports that even though undergraduates may have a documented disability such as dyslexia, “students may not necessarily request an accommodation or identify themselves on campus as having a disability” (paragraph 15). The right to choose whether to disclose a disability or not is afforded to the student by the same Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 referred to previously. Unfortunately, this can cause frustration for both the student, who will not receive needed accommodations, and the faculty, who may sense a need, but is unable to determine if a student is struggling due to a disability or a lack of skill in the areas of reading and writing. Commonly observed difficulties such as taking notes, processing auditory and written information, poor handwriting and spelling (Shaywitz, 2003; Ruzic, 2001; Hatcher, Snowling, & Griffiths, 2002), lack of vocabulary development, difficulty with sentence structure and understanding text organization (Moats, 2002) are a few characteristics of a student with dyslexia that are also mirrored in non-

disabled, academically vulnerable students who struggle with underdeveloped reading and writing skills. This exacerbates the faculty's feeling that they are unable to address the issue without violating a student with a disability's right to choose (Burgstahler & Doe, 2006).

Many students will experience unexpected barriers to their learning that result from administrators, faculty, and staff who lack the training to successfully address their needs (Johnson, 2006). Thus, students may need assurance that putting forth the effort required in higher education is worthwhile (Foushee & Sleigh, n.d.), and that disclosing their disability will not have a negative impact on their college experience (Laing, 2003; Johnson, 2006). Regrettably, there is a lack of knowledge and understanding of dyslexia amongst university staff (Farmer, Riddick & Sterling, 2002). Laing (2003) reports on the case of one student's experience in trying to obtain assistance with an exam and was told "that dyslexia 'did not exist' and that dyslexia was just 'about inability to produce good quality written work'" (p. 325).

As expected, students run a higher risk of dropping out in the first year of college (Burgstahler & Doe, 2006; Recruitment & Retention in Higher Education, 2005). DeBerard, & Spielmans (2004) cite the studies of two researchers, Porter and Tinto respectfully, that address the high college dropout rate: "40 percent of college students will leave higher education without getting a degree (Porter, 1990) with 75 percent of such students leaving within their first two years of college (Tinto, 1987)" (p. 66). In addition, a report by the National Center for Education Statistics indicates that while 64 percent of freshmen will complete

their degree within 5 years, only 43 percent of those with multiple risk factors remain enrolled to reach graduation (as cited in Greene, & Greene, 2002).

Frustration caused by the limitations of customary teaching practices is one reason given for the high drop out rate of struggling students (Grover & Hendricks, n.d.). College faculty need to critically examine beliefs concerning their responsibility for ensuring that all students, not just the traditional academically-prepared, can reach their potential.

Faculty Attitudes

The role of the college instructor has changed throughout the years. In his 1869 inaugural address, Charles W. Elliot, past president of Harvard University, offered a paradigm shift in the thinking of higher education at the time: “The American college is obligated to supplement the American school. Whatever elementary instruction schools fail to give, the college must supply” (Spann, 2000, p. 3). This was in direct conflict with the previously held belief that only the academically elite should be admitted to college (Spann, 2000).

Imparting knowledge to the best and brightest students is still part of the job of college faculty, but differentiating instruction to meet individual needs has progressed from being a strategy used in the lower grades and is now a virtual requirement of higher education faculty. Although the expectation in higher education is that students can “draw inferences, interpret results, analyze conflicting source documents, support arguments with evidence, solve complex problems that have no obvious answer, draw conclusions, offer explanations, conduct research, and generally think deeply” (National Research Council as

referred to in Conley 2007, p. 24), the reality is that many students do not have the background experiences and skills needed to perform these tasks adequately (McKeachie & Svinicki, 2006).

Instead of viewing students through the eyes of an educator, some college faculty view teaching underprepared students as “unglamorous, unimportant, and demeaning” (Austin, 2000 as quoted in Moore, 2004). This disregard for struggling students can increase a student’s desire to keep a disability secret in order to avoid perceived discrimination from faculty, staff, or peers (Riddick, 2003; Moore, 2004; Vogel, Burgstahler, Sligar, & Zecker, 2006; Lynch and Gussel, 1996 as cited in Johnson, 2006). This same attitude could keep academically vulnerable students from approaching faculty for assistance. Furthermore, gender, age, teaching experience, faculty status, and academic rank are reported in the literature to be factors that impact faculty expertise and attitudes toward working with underprepared students (Vogel, Burgstahler, Sligar, & Zecker, 2006; Johnson, 2006).

These findings can be compounded when including the added pressure of working with academically underprepared and dyslexic students which has carried with it a negative connotation. It is important to include a discussion on the attitudes and beliefs that faculty have concerning working with students who have a reading disability such as dyslexia since the symptoms that dyslexic students portray are identical to those exhibited by academically vulnerable students. This is especially true in the four-year institutions, as seen in a 2006 study by Vogel, Burgstahler, Sligar & Zecker, which utilized an exploratory survey

to investigate faculty knowledge concerning students with disabilities. This study focused on the differences in responses from faculty located at a state university, a private university, and a community college. The conceptual foundation and hypothesis for this study centered on the need for college faculty to be better prepared and trained for working with students with disabilities. The findings revealed that faculty from private universities were “significantly more knowledgeable” about students with disabilities, the relevant legislation, and available on-campus services from the Office of Disabilities (p. 109). In addition, it was discovered that community college faculty “were very much more likely” to encourage students to speak with them about their disability than the faculty from the state or private universities (p. 109).

In a 2002 study, Carol Kozeracki reviewed the findings of three national studies concerning faculty attitudes toward working with students in general, focusing on the differences between community college faculty and faculty from four-year colleges. The findings indicate that community college faculty were more student-oriented in several areas, including “the time and effort spent in the service of student learning” (p.47). Eighty-eight percent of community college faculty agreed that “faculty here are strongly interested in the academic problems of undergraduate students,” versus 80 percent of four-year faculty (p. 50). Similarly, a study conducted to determine what perceptions football coaches had toward offering support services to struggling athletes, showed that there were statistically significant differences between the coaches in a two year institution and those in a four year institution (Keim & Strickland, 2004). Two areas showing

the greatest discrepancies were “Promoting Academic/Professional Involvement” with a difference of 91 percent in two year colleges vs 60 percent from four year colleges; and “Providing Basic Skill Enhancement” with responses of 100 percent vs 72 percent respectively (Keim & Strickland, 2004, p. 37).

For academically vulnerable and dyslexic students to be successful in a four year institution, faculty need to possess positive and receptive attitudes toward their assimilation into higher education (Johnson, 2006). It is unfair and erroneous for faculty to assume that all underprepared students who enroll in four-year institutions are academically-impooverished due to lack of effort or skill on their part. In a large scale, nationally-funded study that began in 1997 and spanned six states, researchers discovered that although 88 percent of today’s high school students hope to attend college, there is a division between the preparation they receive and the expectations of the colleges they plan to attend (Venezia & Kirst, 2005). A study in 1999 also determined that high school testing and requirements for a diploma were not adequate enough to prepare students with the real-world knowledge and skills needed for college (Olson, 2001). One example given stated that many higher education faculty expect incoming freshmen to have mastered the Algebra 2 curriculum, yet most high school exit assessments seldom go beyond Algebra 1 or Geometry (Olson, 2001). These findings are supported in an Issue Brief put out by the Alliance for Excellent Education (2006) which quoted research by Greene & Winters (2005) stating that “of those who do receive a diploma, only half are academically prepared for postsecondary education” (para 3).

Academically vulnerable and dyslexic students are capable of succeeding in college when placed in an appropriate setting and receiving the right academic support (Exley, 2003; Frank, 2005; Maloney, 2003; Moore, 2004). Academic support may require faculty to make minor accommodations or modifications to help the student develop strategies and techniques required to ensure achievement (Lavoie, 2006). Many of these strategies which are beneficial to academically vulnerable and dyslexic students are just as beneficial to the entire class of students because they are based on solid teaching strategies and techniques (Grover & Hendricks, n.d.). Examples of accommodations include extra time to complete exams, modeling of assignment requirements, creating peer partnerships with classmates or an upperclassman who had previously successfully completed the course, use of computer-assisted technology, making class notes available in hard copy or online, creating lesson plans that address the visual, auditory and tactile learner (Grover & Hendricks, n.d.). McKeachie (2006) recommends setting up a type of “electronic match-maker” to allow students to locate others who are willing to study together. This technique would offer a struggling student the opportunity to link up with a non-struggling student in an uninhibited setting.

Faculty members whose attitude is negative toward implementing such strategies because they feel it would offer an unfair advantage for academically vulnerable students, may simply not understand the most current information about teaching pedagogy. By not offering these strategies, faculty are causing students to choose not to disclose their disability or approach them for

assistance. This would result in the student missing out on the very accommodations and modifications that would help them to be successful (Vogel, Burgstahler, Sligar, & Zecker, 2006). It is imperative that faculty become aware of the individual needs of their students. However, rather than segregating the learners in their classroom as either disabled or underprepared, their time would be better spent implementing strategies that are documented as being beneficial to all students (Rings, 2001).

The International Dyslexia Association (IDA) offers many teaching strategies that appear to focus on students with reading and writing difficulties, but are actually solid best practices that instructors of every level should be incorporating into their classrooms. In a fact sheet offered by the IDA, recommended accommodations included the use of a tape recorder for later review and more efficient note-taking, oral clarification of written directions, highlighting essential information from text, developing reading guides, and the use of games, peer-teaching, self-correcting materials, and computer software (interdys.org). Further best practices for teachers offered by IDA include explicit teaching strategies such as using graphic organizers, guided practice, and corrective feedback. Combine these techniques with those found in any professional development training such as maintaining a daily routine, instruction that uses both verbal and visual information, balancing lecture with hands-on activities, and incorporating performance assessment. The academically vulnerable and dyslexic students would then have a level playing field with their more traditional peers.

The concept of developing programs at the postsecondary level to address specific populations of students is not new. The National Collegiate Athletic Association has been working with these issues for many years. One program for athletes that has seen some success is the CHAMPS Life Skills program. This program is designed to address several layers of need through education and counseling including the overall collegiate experience, career transitions, and community contribution (Clark & Parette, 2002). Of particular interest to this researcher is an approach used by the Student Services for Athletes (SAA) at the University of Delaware which focuses on student athletes with learning disabilities (Clark & Parette, 2002). This program strives to help all students become familiar with the education, social, and academic components of higher education while they focus on athletics. This is accomplished through the use of midterm and semester report cards which can trigger academic support, counseling, or conferencing as needed before the issues grow beyond the ability for remediation. Through academic self-reports and constant monitoring, the program's overarching goal of making sure these athletes are as successful as their abilities allow is solidified. A program such as this requires collaboration between the athletic department, the advising department, and all campus faculty members.

Doering (2003) states that with the correct professional development, "even extreme dyslexia need be no barrier to achievement" (p. 99). Professional development trainings must address and enhance the changing role of college

faculty (Scott & Gregg, 2000) and that role includes servicing academically vulnerable and dyslexic students.

Professional Development

Members of college faculty and higher education institutions come from a wide range of backgrounds, education, and experiences (Scott & Gregg, 2000).

Some faculty members are skilled in their discipline, having worked for years in their field, but have little or no professional development in teacher education (Burgstahler & Doe, 2006; McShannon & Hynes, 2005; Scott & Gregg, 2000).

Jacob, Wadlington, & Bailey, (1998) recount the story of a young faculty member who was approached by a student with dyslexia and discovered that not only was he never told about this condition and its impact on him as an educator, but also that his training had not prepared him to be able to make the accommodations this student requested.

Once hired, college faculty often face pressure to produce research and publish which may leave little time for addressing their own professional development needs (Erklenz-Watts, Westbay & Lynd-Balta, 2006). Scott & Gregg (2000) reference a study by Morris, et al, in 1987 which indicates that with increased knowledge about students with learning disabilities comes “positive changes in faculty attitudes and knowledge” toward working with students (p. 163). Effective professional development should help faculty to recognize that the types modifications, support, and assistance suggested for dyslexic students are learning strategies that would be beneficial for every student they teach which includes those considered at-risk or academically vulnerable (Lavoie, 2006;

Burgstahler & Doe, 2006; Farmer, Riddick & Sterling, 2002). For example, allowing the use of a tape player to record lectures, which is a regularly recommended technique for dyslexic students, is reflective of research that shows repeated exposure to the subject matter being studied is an effective method in the long-term retention of material for all learners. Ultimately, the use of modifications and accommodations such as this are designed to assist dyslexic students in meeting the course objectives, and provides “a level playing field” for all students (Jacob, Wadlington, & Bailey, 1998, p. 369).

Wadlington & Wadlington (2005), utilized a carefully constructed questionnaire to investigate educators' beliefs and knowledge about dyslexia. The study was conducted in a large, southern regional university and consisted of 250 faculty and student respondents within the College of Education. The conceptual foundation for this study was how educator attitudes affect the way dyslexic students perceived themselves as learners. The results indicated that even faculty and staff in an education department had “a poor understanding of dyslexia” (p. 27). Although the respondents understood that students with dyslexia did not have a low IQ or difficult home environment, the most frequent misconceptions centered around the characteristics of dyslexia. The findings led researchers to focus on the need for educators to evaluate their attitudes and beliefs concerning dyslexia as a disability and their students as learners. When one considers the implications of educators who are unfamiliar with the characteristics of a recognized disability, it reinforces the concern for academically vulnerable students who exhibit similar characteristics.

A survey conducted by Farmer, Riddick & Sterling (2002) concluded that generally university staff lack “knowledge and understanding of dyslexia” (p.181). It was also found that additional training is needed in order for pedagogical change to occur and that educators would welcome “support and advice on supporting” the learning needs of these students (p. 181). Faculty indicated their willingness to support students once they gained understanding of the “trials and traumas” at-risk students face. This is supported by other research which indicates that although many college faculty have not had the professional development training required to work with academically vulnerable and dyslexic students, most are “generally willing to provide accommodations” once they are aware of what strategies are appropriate (Burgstahler & Doe, 2006, p. 136).

In the past, professional development was offered mainly as in-service training in the form of all-day workshops and lecture series (Erklenz-Watts, Westbay & Lynd-Balta, 2006). Scott & Gregg (2000) references a study by Morris et al (1987) which stated that professional development for faculty consisted of “small group presentations, and discussions, phone consultations, and printed materials” (p.163). This study showed that in-service training had a direct, positive impact on faculty knowledge and attitude (Scott & Gregg, 2000).

According to Lavoie (2006), postsecondary faculty can no longer rely solely on their content knowledge to teach their courses. It is critical that all faculty “possess and practice sound, flexible and responsive teaching techniques” (para 17) if they are to reach all students. In order for this pedagogical shift to occur, higher education institutions must provide effective

and frequent professional development programs that focus on the characteristics of at-risk students, instructional practices, and “advanced learning technologies” (Spann, 2000, p. 4).

In recent years, the creation of on-campus professional development centers (often called the Center for Teaching and Learning or the Center for Teaching Excellence) is focusing on the changing needs of faculty and students. These centers offer faculty workshops, one-on-one consultation sessions, peer observations, campus-wide training, and assistance with classroom instruction and the use of technology. The uniqueness of these centers is the delivery format in which the professional development opportunities are offered. Most offerings occur at various times during the day and week to ensure that all faculty have the opportunity to participate. Faculty workshops on designing lessons and best practices, classroom observations and evaluations, conferences, guest speakers, webinars, instructional design seminars, data management, and technology are all offerings found in most of these centers.

With the current focus on four-year colleges to create in-house teaching and learning centers for faculty, a study conducted by Perin (2004) addressing the issue surrounding the effectiveness and functions of these centers in community colleges is very timely. This qualitative case study focused on understanding the ways that learning assistance centers affect the academic preparedness of students. Fifteen community colleges were involved in the study which consisted of 458 interviews involving a total of 630 people. In addition to the interview transcripts, the researchers used college catalogs, reports, and

instructional materials gathered from the institutions to complete the investigation. The researcher summarized the operations and functions of the learning centers in each of the 15 participating colleges which consisted mainly of tutoring, computer-assisted instruction, workshops, and self-paced remedial courses. A major conceptual finding from this study centered on the demands of higher education on all students, and the need for academic preparedness of all students not just those enrolled in developmental education.

Faculty desires for professional development have been shown to include a wide range of interest levels, need for information, and preferred types of training formats (Vogel, Burgstahler, Sligar, & Zecker, 2006) The study indicated that it is not a lack of desire on the part of faculty to be well informed about these issues. One finding from a study by McShannon and Hynes (2005) which focused on professional development indicated that faculty willingness to implement new strategies increased as they became aware of learner diversity and saw positive results with their students. To further develop positive faculty perceptions of students with learning difficulties, Scott & Gregg (2000) recommended a series of steps for professional development training suggested by Lundeberg and Svien (1988) “(a) assessing faculty needs and concerns; (b) designing the faculty in-service training to address these needs; and (c) evaluating the outcomes of the training” (p. 162).

These suggestions are supported by a study from Burgstahler & Doe, (2006) which looked at designing professional development for college faculty. The study utilized focus groups consisting of both faculty and administrators. The

research “examined (a) experiences of faculty and students with disabilities, (b) content needs of faculty, and (c) professional development delivery preferences of faculty and administrators” (p. 137). Several methods recommended through these focus groups concerning future professional development included workshops that were department-specific, presentations imbedded in faculty meetings, peer-to-peer trainings, online courses and video, as well as reference materials (Burgstahler & Doe, 2006). Encouragingly, these are the very types of professional development offered by the CTL programs mentioned earlier. Further results of this study indicated a desire on the part of the faculty to receive professional development on basic pedagogy, disability-related accommodations, legal issues pertaining to students with disabilities, campus policies, and resources for both faculty and students (Burgstahler & Doe, 2006).

In an article addressing the issue of quality professional development, Knight (2006) comments on the frequency of “non-formal learning” (p. 33) within higher education. This is more commonly referred to as learning on the job and is not a negative practice, for it is found naturally in the “hidden curriculum” (Knight, 2006, p. 33). However, there needs to be a concentrated effort on the part of higher education administration to offer professional development that is explicit and strategic if the issue of working with academically vulnerable and dyslexia college students is to be successfully addressed.

Closure

This literature review examined three issues focusing on faculty preparedness for working with academically vulnerable and dyslexic adult

students: 1) learner characteristics, 2) faculty attitudes, and 3) professional development requirements. According to Ring (2001), "It is common knowledge that few faculty (including those teaching developmental courses) have training in working with under-prepared students" (para 24). Too often, students who are experiencing difficulties adjusting go unnoticed until they withdraw from college because faculty are unable to detect that there is a problem (Beck & Davidson, 2001). With the enrollment of an increasingly more diverse population of students comes the obligation to evaluate the professional development of the faculty in whose classrooms these students will be educated. Of particular importance is whether faculty are being offered, and are taking advantage of, opportunities to learn about the characteristics and specific needs of academically vulnerable students who struggle with reading and writing, as well as the most appropriate instructional strategies used to promote success. The increasing demands of teacher accountability and higher expectation for student outcomes brings with it a larger concern about achievement and retention rates of vulnerable college students.

Teaching academically vulnerable and dyslexic students can be a challenge to the pedagogy of postsecondary faculty. Bauman (2006) states that although there is frustration and extra work involved with teaching these unique students, there is more reward in "teaching people who never thought they could do anything worthwhile than there is leading brilliant students to expected A's" (p. B5). Where is the future of professional development headed? One direction it should be moving is toward searching out and offering training that helps

educators find the knowledge and motivation to work with all students (Scott & Gregg, 2000), including those who come to class underprepared.

An extensive search was undertaken to locate research concerning at-risk and underprepared students. The research located and reviewed for this study centered mainly on faculty and students in community colleges. Is the lack of research aimed at four-year colleges simply due to the fact that greater numbers of at-risk students are found at community colleges, or as Kozeracki (2002) speculates, is it due to the more positive attitude and greater amount of time and effort community college faculty spend working with underprepared students?

It is the goal of this study to bring the issue of preparing faculty in four-year institutions to deal effectively with underprepared, academically vulnerable students who struggle with reading and writing to the forefront of future research efforts.

CHAPTER 3
PROCEDURES
Data Required

This chapter describes the methodology of this study. The purpose of this research was to investigate the professional development needs of postsecondary educators by examining faculty knowledge and perceptions about working with college students who are experiencing reading and writing difficulties. An additional objective for this investigation was to ascertain college faculty's ability to recognize the characteristics of academically underprepared students and to offer support that meets the needs of this unique population. The procedures used to identify and select participants and to gather data are explained.

This study was designed to analyze how well prepared faculty consider themselves to be at identifying the characteristics of academically vulnerable students who experience reading and writing difficulties and consequently offer appropriate assistance. Faculty attitudes toward working with these students are analyzed, as to how it may be impacted by gender, major, years of teaching in higher education, and type of institution.

Study Sample

Twelve northwestern Pennsylvania colleges and universities were contacted to participate in the survey. Pennsylvania was chosen because it is the home state of the researcher and thus affords a greater sense of familiarity with the demographics of the faculty and student populations. Table 1 indicates that

the demographics of these 12 institutions are representative of those throughout the state of Pennsylvania, as well as those found nationally. Restricting the research grid to northwestern Pennsylvania was done in order to maintain a similar sample population throughout the institutions. The twelve institutions targeted for this study include three public colleges, three state-related college, and six private colleges.

Table 1.

Demographics of Targeted Institutions

	Women	Men	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian/PI	Am Indian	Unknown
National Statistics	58%	42%	67%	12%	10%	1%	1%	--
Pennsylvania Statistics*	56%	44%	77%	7%	2%	3%	<1%	6%
Public								
Clarion University	61%	39%	91.6%	5.4%	0.9%	0.7%	0.3%	0.3%
Edinboro University	58%	42%	88%	7.9%	1.2%	0.7%	0.2%	--
Slippery Rock University	55%	45%	89%	4.2%	0.9%	0.7%	0.4%	3.7%
State-Related								
Penn State - Behrend	33%	67%	91.5%	3.4%	1.7%	2.3%	--	--
University of Pitt Bradford	60%	40%	72.3%	3%	0.8%	1%	0.5%	22.3%
University of Pitt Titusville	65%	35%	81.2%	15.4%	1.1%	2%	--	0.4%
Private								
Allegheny College	53%	47%	92.7%	1.5%	1.2%	2.9%	0.5%	--
Gannon University	60%	40%	89.2%	4.3%	0.7%	1.4%	0.2%	3.1%
Grove City College	50%	50%	95.6%	0.3%	0.4%	2%	0.1%	0.9%
Mercyhurst College	60%	40%	79.6%	3.5%	1.5%	0.5%	0.2%	10.5%
Thiel College	45%	55%	59.5%	5.7%	0.6%	0.6%	0.1%	29.1%
Westminster College	64%	36%	69.8%	2.3%	0.4%	0.3%	0.2%	27.1%

Note. Statistics were from the 2005 National Center for Education Statistics

*PA statistics from 2004 Pennsylvania Department of Education (includes public, state-related, and private postsecondary institutions)

The targeted institutions were chosen based on their geographical location within the boundaries of northwestern Pennsylvania by using the Pennsylvania Department of Education's Pennsylvania Education Directory.

The Presidents of the twelve institutions were contacted via a phone call. A follow-up email with an attached request for site approval was sent. Of these twelve institutions, three public, two state-related, and one private, agreed to participate and returned the site approval letter (see Appendix B). The survey was distributed to full-time instructional faculty in these six colleges and universities through the use of StudentVoice[®].com, a web-based survey company. The sample was approximately 1200 faculty from all departments and specialties within the college or university. A cover letter was attached to the survey questionnaire explaining the voluntary nature of the study and requesting participation (see Appendix C).

Several additional variables were reviewed during the selection process, but did not impact the inclusion or exclusion of a participating institution. These variables included: 1) number of instructional full-time and part-time faculty, 2) faculty/student ratio, 3) average range of SAT scores of incoming freshmen, and 4) whether the faculty had access to an on-campus professional development center.

Data Collection

Data collection for this study consisted of administering an electronic survey through StudentVoice[®].com containing a cover letter and a 30-item questionnaire. This questionnaire featured nine demographic, 16 Likert-scale

style, and five open-ended questions designed to explore faculty's knowledge and perceptions of their preparedness to teach students with reading and writing difficulties. The first 25 items in this questionnaire were adapted from "Assessment of Faculty Attitudes and Beliefs Toward Accommodations for Students with Disabilities" by Diane L. Bourque, Ed.D. (2004). Four of the five open-ended questions were adapted from a study in a white paper entitled, *Children Who Can't Read Become Adolescents Who Can't Read*, which was prepared and posted on the Tennessee Center for the Study and Treatment of Dyslexia website by Joyce, M.T. (1999). Permission to use this information was obtained from both Dr. Bourque and Dr. Joyce (see Appendix A).

A survey URL link, created through StudentVoice[®], was sent to a contact person chosen by the college or university President, who then forwarded the survey link via e-mail to the faculty. This format allowed faculty to take the survey online and eliminated the need for respondents to fill out and return paper surveys. The survey distribution began in late April 2008. Approximately two weeks later a notice was sent to the college or university contact person requesting them to send an email to the faculty as a reminder them of the May 2008 deadline and requesting a response from any faculty who had not yet responded. The identity of survey respondents was concealed through the use auto-generated, randomized respondent identification numerical codes. The true identity or personal information of the respondents is inaccessible by the researcher. The data collection window was closed on May 19, 2008.

Method of Obtaining Data

Instrument Used

The assessment instrument used in this study to gather data was originally created by Diane Bourque to assess postsecondary faculty attitudes and beliefs toward making accommodations for students with disabilities. Dr. Bourque developed this survey instrument by using a theoretical framework of Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) referred to as The Theory of Reasoned Action. This framework states that “Intention to perform a behavior is a function of attitudes toward engaging in the behavior and perceived normative pressure to perform the behavior. Performing a behavior is a function of intention to perform the behavior” (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). Dr. Bourque pilot-tested the survey instrument at Massasoit Community College in Brockton, MA. The participants in that study included 144 full-time faculty members. Faculty members were asked “whether the survey items and directions were clear” and “how much time was required to complete the survey” (Bourque, 2005, p. 74). Fifty-five percent of faculty responded with 93 percent indicating that the items were clear, 97 percent indicated clarity of directions, and 84 percent responded that the survey took less than 20 minutes to complete. Adjustments were made to the final survey based on participant responses and factor analysis.

For this study, the survey instrument was further adapted from its concentration on students with disabilities to address non-disabled students who are academically vulnerable due to difficulty with reading and writing. This was done in order to focus the data on answering the main research question: Are

college faculty adequately prepared to offer assistance to academically vulnerable students who struggle with reading and writing? (See Appendix D to view survey instrument.) In addition to the main research question, four sub-questions this study intended to answer included:

1. To what extent do college faculty believe they are responsible for assisting academically vulnerable students who struggle with reading and writing?
2. To what extent do college faculty feel they are prepared to offer assistance to academically vulnerable students who struggle with reading and writing?
3. To what extent are college faculty adequately prepared to identify the characteristics of academically vulnerable students who struggle with reading and writing?
4. Are there differences in responses to subquestions 1, 2, 3 above as a function of gender, discipline, number of years in higher education, or tenure status?

Pilot Study

In order to ensure the survey instrument was reliable, the researcher had the survey reviewed and evaluated by a) faculty of the developmental department of a local community college; and b) the director of the Program for Students with Learning Disabilities at a local private college. The reviewers were asked to evaluate the survey for effectiveness of design and accuracy of

terminology. Feedback from these two levels of evaluation were taken into consideration and the survey was adjusted accordingly.

The refined survey was again reviewed and evaluated by a cohort of doctoral students in the Curriculum and Instruction doctoral degree program at Indiana University of Pennsylvania. The make-up of this cohort included three full-time college instructors, two school psychologist/counselors, one high school principal, seven classroom teachers, one retired classroom teacher, two public school literacy coaches, one technology trainer, and one proprietary school president. In addition, two members of the cohort work as adjuncts in a college setting. The reviewers were asked to evaluate the survey for readability and design effectiveness.

The redesigned survey instrument was piloted with faculty members at Gannon University and Indiana University of Pennsylvania. The pilot participants were asked to evaluate the survey for readability and design effectiveness. Feedback from the reviewers and the pilot group resulted in the following changes:

- the term “dyslexia” was removed from two questions as some respondents felt it focused the question in a direction not indicated by the research questions
- two questions were reworded due to the respondents aversion to the negative overtone of each
- the cover letter was shortened to ensure the length of time needed to complete the survey would average 10 minutes

- one open-ended question was changed to eliminate ambiguity

Data Analysis

College and university faculty completed an online survey during the months of April 2008 and May 2008. This survey consisted of both qualitative and quantitative data. Chapter 4 presents the findings of the research using descriptive analysis and tables to analyze the quantitative data and inductive analysis to analyze the qualitative data. The findings are divided and presented in relation to the research question the data addresses.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS

Statistical data in this study were gathered in order to answer the main research question: Are college faculty adequately prepared to offer assistance to academically vulnerable students who struggle with reading and writing? The data were organized around four sub-questions which focused on determining what relationships, if any, exist between faculty's perceptions concerning students who struggle with reading and writing and their understanding of the needs of these students.

Demographic data were gathered to explore whether or not differences in perceptions existed as a function of faculty gender, tenure status, or discipline as indicated by their responses on the survey. Open-ended questions were utilized to give respondents an opportunity to voice their opinions and clarify their perceptions.

Participants

Demographic Information

The survey was sent to six colleges and universities in northwestern Pennsylvania. The survey response rate was 182 participants from three public institutions ($n=109$), two state-related institutions ($n=52$), and one private college ($n=21$), with 174 of those respondents completing at least 80 percent of the survey. Forty-two percent of respondents were male ($n=73$) and 58 percent were female ($n=101$). The division among faculty based on rank was well balanced with Assistant Professors making up 32 percent ($n=56$), Associate Professors

making up 25 percent ($n=43$) and Full Professors making up 29 percent ($n=50$). The remaining 14 percent of the respondents were Instructors ($n=25$). Table 2 shows that faculty were similarly distributed in the category of number of years of experience. Twenty-nine percent ($n=51$) of respondents had 0-9 years of experience; 34 percent ($n=59$) had 10-19 years of experience; and 25 percent ($n=44$) had 20-29 years of experience. The remaining 11 percent ($n=19$) had been teaching 30 or more years.

Table 2.

Faculty by Number of Years of Experience

Years	N	Percentage
0-9	51	29%
10-19	59	34%
20-29	44	25%
30-50	19	11%

Note. 1 respondent chose not answer this question

The demographic that indicated the greatest difference was faculty tenure status with 68 percent being tenured ($n=119$) and 32 percent being non-tenured ($n=55$) faculty.

To ensure the validity of the data analysis, the data were reformulated to remove any respondents who did not complete at least 80 percent of the survey. Although a few of the remaining respondents may have skipped one or two questions, overall, the results presented in Chapter 4 are from the remaining 174 respondents who completed the minimum requirements.

Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected and analyzed.

Quantitative data were collected in the form of demographic data and Likert scale items. The findings were presented descriptively and were further analyzed using Chi Square statistical procedures. Qualitative data was collected from five open-ended questions. Inductive analysis was employed to analyze the qualitative data.

Results

Analysis of Quantitative Data

Data Analysis for Research Subquestion 1

Several questions in the survey were focused on investigating to what extent college faculty believe they are responsible for assisting academically vulnerable students who struggle with reading and writing.

When asked if they think that providing assistance to academically vulnerable students fell under the responsibility of the university's learning centers (item 10), 82 percent ($n=142$) of faculty respondents agreed (see Table 3).

Table 3.

Results from Item 10

	Agree	Disagree	N/A
Faculty ($n=174$)	142	30	2
	82%	17%	1%

Faculty were evenly split over whether providing assistance to academically vulnerable students requires an unreasonable amount of additional

work for faculty (item 11) with 52 percent ($n=90$) agreeing and 48 percent ($n=83$) disagreeing (see Table 4).

Table 4.

Results from Item 11

	Agree	Disagree	N/A
Faculty ($n=174$)	90	83	1
	52%	48%	>1%

Table 5 indicates that respondents also appeared equally divided concerning whether academically vulnerable students should attend a community college before enrolling in a four year institution (item 20) with 58 percent ($n=101$) responding that they should and 40 percent ($n=70$) responding that they should not.

Table 5.

Results from Item 20

		Agree	Disagree	N/A
Faculty	N=174	101	70	3
	%	58%	40%	2%

The equal distribution of responses continued when faculty were asked if they thought that providing out of class assistance to students with reading and writing difficulties fell under the responsibility of faculty (item 22) to which 41 percent agreed ($n=101$) (see Table 6).

Table 6.

Results from Item 22

	Agree	Disagree	N/A
Faculty (n=174)	71	101	2
	41%	58%	1%

Respondents appeared to be similarly divided concerning whether there were some occasions when they would not provide assistance to an academically vulnerable student (item 24). Fifty-seven percent ($n=100$) of respondents agreed that there were occasions when they would not provide assistance, leaving 41 percent ($n=71$) that disagreed (see Table 7).

Table 7.

Results from Item 24

	Agree	Disagree	N/A
Faculty (n=174)	100	71	3
	57%	41%	2%

Interestingly, Table 8 shows the trend reversed when an overwhelming majority of faculty felt that providing assistance to academically vulnerable students is consistent with good pedagogy (item 13) with 78 percent ($n=136$) of respondents agreeing.

Table 8.

Results from Item 13

	Agree	Disagree	N/A
Faculty (n=174)	136	36	2
	78%	21%	1%

Regardless of the responses to previous questions which seem to indicate that faculty do not feel that providing assistance for academically vulnerable students is part of their responsibility, 80 percent ($n=139$) of the faculty agreed that they played a vital role in meeting the educational needs of academically vulnerable students (item 25) (see Table 9).

Table 9.

Results from Item 25

	Agree	Disagree	N/A
Faculty (n-174)	139	34	1
	80%	20%	>1%

Summary of Data Analysis for Research Subquestion 1

Research Subquestion 1 investigated to what extent faculty thought they are responsible for assisting academically vulnerable students who struggle in the areas of reading and writing. Although the majority of faculty understood that their role in assisting academically vulnerable students was vital (80%) and that providing this assistance was good pedagogy (78%), only 42 percent of respondents felt that the responsibility fell on faculty. Instead, they responded overwhelmingly (82%) that the responsibility should fall to the institution's

learning center. Over half of respondents (58%) advocated that students who struggle in the areas of reading and writing attend a community college.

Data Analysis for Research Subquestion 2

The importance of professional development was also addressed. Three questions investigated to what extent college faculty thought they were prepared to offer assistance to academically vulnerable students who struggle with reading and writing.

When asked if they felt they had received adequate training from their institution regarding the provision of assistance to academically vulnerable students (item 9), the faculty were split in their responses with 49 percent ($n=85$) stating *yes* and 51 percent ($n=89$) stating *no*. No significance was found when the faculty's type of institution was evaluated (see Table 10).

Table 10.

Results from Item 9

	Yes	No
Faculty ($n=174$)	85	89
	49%%	51%

When asked if they had sufficient background in educational methods to be an effective instructor for academically vulnerable students (item 17), 59 percent ($n=103$) responded that they did (see Table 11).

Table 11.

Results from Item 17

	Agree	Disagree	N/A
Faculty (n=174)	103	65	6
	59%	37%	3%

Sixty percent ($n=104$) of faculty disagreed with the statement that the need to accommodate for academically vulnerable students decreased their own teaching effectiveness (item 23) (see Table 12).

Table 12.

Results from Item 23

	Agree	Disagree	N/A
Faculty (n=174)	67	104	3
	39%%	60%	2%

Summary of Data Analysis for Research Subquestion 2

Research Subquestion 2 investigated to what extent faculty felt they were prepared to work with academically vulnerable students who struggle in the areas of reading and writing. It appears that many faculty felt that they had sufficient background in educational methodology (59%), but slightly less felt that their institution provided adequate training on this topic (49%). Faculty responded positively to a question concerning whether accommodating for academically vulnerable students decreased their effectiveness as a teacher with 60 percent disagreeing with that statement. Findings supported the researcher's hypothesis

that additional professional development around the topic of best practices for teaching academically vulnerable students would be well-received by faculty.

Data Analysis for Research Subquestion 3

This subquestion focused on the extent to which college faculty are adequately prepared to identify the characteristics of academically vulnerable students who struggle with reading and writing.

By a majority score of 79 percent ($n=137$), faculty disagreed with the statement that academically vulnerable students generally have below average intelligence (item 12) (see Table 13).

Table 13.

Results from Item 12

	Agree	Disagree	N/A
Faculty ($n=174$)	29	137	8
	17%	79%	5%

When asked about their preparedness to identify students with reading and writing difficulties, respondents were again almost evenly split with 55 percent ($n=91$) agreeing they were adequately prepared to identify the characteristics of academically vulnerable students (item 19) and 43 percent ($n=72$) disagreeing (see Table 14).

Table 14.

Results from Item 19

	Agree	Disagree	N/A
Faculty (n=174)	95	76	3
	55%	44%	2%

Summary of Data Analysis for Research Subquestion 3

Research Subquestion 3 used two questions to investigate to what extent faculty felt they are prepared to identify the characteristics of academically vulnerable students who struggle in the areas of reading and writing. The majority of faculty (79%) recognized that academically vulnerable students were not struggling due to a low IQ rating. Faculty responses were equally divided (55%) concerning how well prepared they were in identifying the characteristics of academically vulnerable students. It is imperative that faculty recognize the characteristics of academically vulnerable students in order to be able to teach them effectively.

Data Analysis for Research Subquestion 4

The fourth subquestion investigated on to what extent differences in gender, discipline, or number of years experience in education may impact attitude or willingness to offer assistance to academically vulnerable students who struggle with reading and writing. The results section for Subquestion 4 is presented through the use of comparison data.

Analysis of items 9 through 11 showed no significance between genders in responses. When asked whether they believed that a student who was struggling with reading and writing would most likely have a below average

intelligence, an unanticipated correlation was revealed. Twenty-seven percent ($n=19$) of male respondents answered “yes” compared to only 10 percent ($n=10$) of the female respondents (see Table 15).

Table 15.

*Comparison Between Gender on Responses to Item 12: You Believe Academically Vulnerable Students Generally have Below Average Intelligence**

Group	Disagree	Agree
Female ($n=96$)	86	10
	90%	10%
Male ($n=70$)	51	19
	73%	27%

Note. χ^2 (1, $N=166$) is equal to 7.855, $p=.005$ ($p=.007$ for Fisher Exact Test).

*8 respondents chose not to answer this question.

No significance was found when comparing items 13 through 17 in regard to gender. There was a statistically significant finding in item 18 which asked faculty whether they felt that the time required to prepare for academically vulnerable students took them away from their other scholarly pursuits. Female respondents were fairly evenly split at 44 percent ($n=43$) disagreeing and 56 percent ($n=55$) agreeing with the statement. The male respondents, however, appeared to have differing views with only 28 percent ($n=20$) disagreeing and 72 percent ($n=52$) agreeing (see Table 16).

Table 16.

*Comparison Between Gender on Responses to Item 18: The Time Required to Prepare Alternate Instructional and Examination Methods takes Away from Other Scholarly Activities Which are Vital to Tenure and Promotion**

Group	Disagree	Agree
Female (n=98)	43	55
	44%	56%
Male (n=72)	20	52
	28%	72%

Note. χ^2 (1, N=170) is equal to 4.612, $p=.032$ ($p=.037$ for Fisher Exact Test)

*4 respondents chose not to answer this question

Item 19 also showed a statistical significance between genders when faculty were asked if they felt their training had adequately prepared them to identify the characteristics of academically vulnerable students. Female respondents were more apt to respond in agreement ($n=63$). The male respondents were more evenly split on this question with 45 percent ($n=32$) agreeing and 55 percent ($n=39$) disagreeing (see Table 17).

Table 17.

*Comparison Between Gender on Responses to Item 19: Your Training has Adequately Prepared You to Identify the Characteristics of an Academically Vulnerable Student**

Group	Disagree	Agree
Female (n=100)	37	63
	37%	63%
Male (n=71)	39	32
	55%	45%

Note. χ^2 (1, N=171) is equal to 5.406, $p=.020$ ($p=.028$ for Fisher Exact Test)

*3 respondents chose not to answer this question

Questions 20 through 25 showed no statistical significance in reference to gender.

When analyzing the data in relation to the number of years of teaching experience, a significant impact was found on item 22 which asked if faculty felt that providing out of class assistance was part of faculty responsibility. The number of faculty having taught 0-9 years and those having taught 20-29 years appeared to disagree with this statement more often than the other groups with 58 percent ($n=29$) and 59 percent ($n=26$) respectively. However, faculty having taught 10-19 years indicated a stronger disagreement with this question with 71 percent ($n=41$) disagreeing. In the 30-50 year range, only 26 percent ($n=14$) disagreed with this statement (see Table 18).

Table 18.

*Comparison Between Number of Years Taught on Responses to Item 22:
Providing Out of Class Assistance to Students with Reading and Writing
Difficulties Falls Under the Responsibility of Faculty**

Group	Disagree	Agree
0-9 (n=50)	29	21
	58%	42%
10-19 (n=58)	41	17
	71%	29%
20-29 (n=44)	26	18
	59%	41%
30-50 (n=19)	5	14
	26%	74%

Note. χ^2 (1, N=171) is equal to 11.693, $p=.009$

*3 respondents chose not to answer this question

Item 24 also showed a statistically significant response. This question asked respondents if there was an occasion in which they would not offer academically vulnerable students assistance. In the 20-29 year range, 79 percent agreed with this statement. This is significantly higher than the other groups whose answers were in the 53-59 percent range for agreement (see Table 19).

Table 19.

*Comparison Between Number of Years Taught on Responses to Item 24: There are Some Occasions When I Would NOT Provide Assistance to an Academically Vulnerable Student**

Group	Disagree	Agree
0-9 (n=51)	24	27
	47%	53%
10-19 (n=57)	27	30
	47%	53%
20-29 (n=43)	9	34
	21%	79%
30-50 (n=19)	10	9
	53%	59%

Note. χ^2 (1, N=170) is equal to 9.937, $p=.019$

*4 respondents chose not to answer this question

Due to the difference in teaching styles often seen between faculty who are certified teachers and those who were not professionally trained to teach, one specific comparison group was formed: Education Faculty and Other Discipline Faculty. This comparison group was formed in order to establish how professional teacher training may impact perceptions and beliefs as they relate to pedagogy and understanding of teaching academically vulnerable students. These data revealed the most significant findings.

Due to the training requirements involved for acquiring teacher certification, it is not surprising that the responses to item 13 which asked if faculty think providing assistance to academically vulnerable students was

consistent with good pedagogy were significantly different between Education faculty and Other Discipline faculty. Education faculty responded with 100 percent ($n=21$) agreement, as compared to 76 percent ($n=113$) of the Other Discipline faculty (see Table 20).

Table 20.

*Comparison Between Education Faculty to Other Discipline Faculty on Responses to Item 13: You Believe Providing Assistance to Academically Vulnerable Students is Consistent with Good Pedagogy**

Group	Disagree	Agree
Education faculty ($n=21$)	0 0%	21 100%
Other Discipline faculty ($n=148$)	35 24%	113 76%

Note. χ^2 (1, $N=169$) is equal to 6.263, $p=.012$ ($p=.008$ for Fisher Exact Test)

*5 respondents chose not to answer this question

No significance was found between Education faculty and Other Discipline faculty in items 9 through 16. Although not quite statistically significant at $p=.053$, responses to item 17, which asked if faculty think they have sufficient background in educational methods to be an effective teacher with academically vulnerable students, 81 percent ($n=17$) of Education faculty agreed, but only 59 percent of Other Discipline faculty agreed with this statement (see Table 21).

Table 21.

*Comparison Between Education Faculty to Other Discipline Faculty on Responses to Item 17: You Have Sufficient Background in Educational Methods to be an Effective Instructor of Academically Vulnerable Students**

Group	Disagree	Agree
Education faculty (n=21)	4 19%	17 81%
Other Discipline faculty (n=144)	59 41%	85 59%

Note. χ^2 (1, N=171) is equal to 3.732, $p=.053$ ($p=.058$ for Fisher Exact Test)

*9 respondents chose not to answer this question

Item 18 showed no significance, but question 19 indicated there was a strong statistical significance between the responses of Education faculty compared to that of Other Discipline faculty. This question asked whether the faculty felt the time required to prepare alternate instructional and examination methods took them away from other scholarly activities. Interestingly, 86 percent ($n=18$) of Education faculty agreed, while only 52 percent ($n=76$) of Other Discipline faculty agreed with this statement (see Table 22).

Table 22.

*Comparison Between Education Faculty to Other Discipline Faculty on Responses to Item 19: You Believe the Time Required to Prepare Alternate Instructional and Examination Methods Takes Faculty Away from Other Scholarly Activities Which are Vital to Tenure and Promotion**

Group	Disagree	Agree
Education faculty (n=21)	3 14%	18 86%
Other Discipline faculty (n=144)	71 48%	76 52%

Note. χ^2 (1, N=168) is equal to 8.626, $p=.003$ ($p=.004$ for Fisher Exact Test)

*6 respondents chose not to answer this question

No significance was found in items 20 through 22. In item 23, the analysis did not indicate a statistical significance at $p=.051$, but the data were interesting and thus need to be mentioned. Faculty were asked if they felt that the need to accommodate academically vulnerable students decreased their own teaching effectiveness. Eighty-one percent ($n=17$) of Education faculty disagreed with this statement while 59 percent ($n=87$) of Other Discipline faculty disagreed (see Table 23).

Table 23.

*Comparison Between Education Faculty to Other Discipline Faculty on Responses to Item 23: You Believe the Need to Accommodate for Academically Vulnerable Students Decreases Your Own Teaching Effectiveness**

Group	Disagree	Agree
Education faculty (n=21)	17 81%	4 19%
Other Discipline faculty (n=148)	87 59%	61 41%

Note. χ^2 (1, N=169) is equal to 3.819, $p=.051$ ($p=.058$ for Fisher Exact Test)

*5 respondents chose not to answer this question

No significance was indicated in items 24 or 25.

Summary of Data Analysis for Research Subquestion 4

Research Subquestion 4 investigated to what extent differences in gender, discipline, or number of years of experience in education may impact attitude or willingness to offer assistance to academically vulnerable students who struggle with reading and writing.

When comparing the results according to gender, the results indicated that male faculty (27%) appeared to be slightly more likely to believe that an academically vulnerable student has a low IQ than female faculty (10%). This misunderstanding may be correlated with the results indicating that male faculty feel less prepared to identify the characteristics (45%) than female faculty (63%).

The greatest correlations in reference to the number of years of experience faculty have were found in two questions which asked faculty about

providing out-of-class assistance to academically vulnerable students. Those faculty who have taught 30-50 years appeared to understand or accept their mentor role with an overwhelming response of 74 percent agreeing to provide out-of-class assistance. The faculty in the 20-29 year range responded with only 41 percent agreeing they would provide out of class assistance. Similar results were seen in a question asking if there were occasions in which they would not provide assistance. Seventy-nine percent of the 20-29 year range agreed that there were times they would not provide this assistance. Faculty in the 30-50 year range responded with 59 percent agreeing with this statement.

A subgroup was formed by discipline in order to investigate whether a relationship existed between the pedagogical beliefs of faculty in education disciplines and those of non-education disciplines.

Education faculty responded more positively on questions pertaining to whether they felt their institution provided adequate training on how to work with academically vulnerable students (100%) than faculty from other disciplines (76%). On a similar question, which asked if they felt they had sufficient background in educational methods to work with academically vulnerable students, Education faculty again responded more positively (81%) than the faculty from other disciplines (59%). Not surprisingly, there was a distinct difference in responses between the groups when asked if they felt that accommodating for academically vulnerable students decreased their effectiveness. More Education faculty, who are required to demonstrate ability to

make accommodations for all types of learners to gain certification, tended to disagree with this statement (81%) than Other Discipline faculty (59%).

One particularly interesting result showed up in a question asking faculty if they felt that the time required to prepare alternate instructional techniques and examinations took them away from their institution's scholarly activities. Responses to this question showed that Education faculty agreed with this statement at a much higher rate (86%) than the faculty from other disciplines (52%).

Analysis of Qualitative Data

Qualitative data were examined to gain a more comprehensive insight into how faculty viewed the issues of working with academically vulnerable students who experience difficulty with reading and writing (Appendix E).

In response to item 26 which focused on the types of barriers faculty felt they encountered in being able to offer effective instruction for academically vulnerable students, the issue of time was the most commonly offered response (see Table 24). One faculty member summed up the views of many respondents in the following comment:

•Time - 45 students in a class and 50-60 academic advisees makes working with these kinds of students a challenge to say the least.

Table 24.

Results from Item 26 - What are the barriers to getting effective instruction for students with reading and writing difficulties in your school? (143 respondents)

Response	#	%
Time	25	17%
Class size	13	9%
Student resistance	11	8%
Students not taking initiative to receive help	9	6%
Students not self-disclosing weakness/need	8	6%
Student attitude (hostility, apathy)	7	5%
Lack of support or training for faculty	7	5%
Lack of resources for faculty	7	5%
Student motivation	4	3%
Student fear	3	2%
Attendance	3	2%
Technology	2	1%

Note. Not all respondents chose to answer this question

Faculty responses to item 27 indicated that the students' behavior and lack of motivation were major causes of frustration faculty feel toward academically vulnerable students (see Table 25). This frustration can be heard in the following faculty comments:

- Their lack of desire to seek help or take advice.*
- My frustration comes when these students do not utilize the resources available to them.*
- Students, in general, don't seem to want to hear that they are deficient and don't really want to work to change.*
- It takes a lot of time to properly help someone. And, again, many academically vulnerable students are not very motivated or are simply easily overwhelmed. Some don't even understand basic course requirements.*

Table 25.

Results from Question 27 - What are your frustrations in teaching students with reading and writing difficulties? (146 respondents)

Response	#	%
Time	17	12%
Lack of student effort/initiative	11	8%
Poor early learning experience	11	8%
“Dumbing down” of content or instruction	6	4%
Not qualified to teach vulnerable students	5	3%
Lack of faculty training/knowledge concerning vulnerable students	4	3%
Lack of consistency in standards between faculty/departments	4	3%
Students manipulating the system	3	2%
Institutional reluctance/support	3	2%
Absenteeism	3	2%
Poor writing skills	2	1%
Poor student attitude	2	1%

Note. Not all respondents chose to answer this question

No formal training was the most commonly listed response (27% of respondents) to item 28 which asked faculty to describe how prepared they were for teaching academically vulnerable students (see Table 26). There were several comments similar to this one:

- Very little, if at all. There is no formal pedagogical or other training provided to faculty regarding best practices in addressing the needs of these students.*

This was followed closely by on-the-job experience (17% of respondents) and having a background in education (17% of respondents). These examples are representative of several entries:

- Most of my preparation comes from experience.*

•I have picked up what I have on my own. As a former public school teacher for 13 years, I learned tips to help struggling elementary students. This self-initiated training has served me in assisting my college students.

Four respondents stated that they felt faculty should not need to be prepared to work with students who struggle with reading and writing. One faculty member summarized it this way:

•I have not been prepared at all. Again, I do not believe it is my responsibility to remediate students. It is the student's responsibility as a college student to figure out how to help him/herself. I am willing and eager to provide advice; nothing more.

Table 26.

Results from Item 28 - To what extent have you been prepared to serve the students you teach who are experiencing reading and writing difficulties? Please explain your answer. (147 respondents)

Response	#	%
No formal training	39	27%
On-the-job experience	25	17%
Background in education/public school experience	25	17%
Workshop/professional development opportunities	21	14%
Degree/education	13	9%
Faculty intrinsic motivation/professional responsibility	9	6%
Personal experience (family or self)	8	5%
Disability Office training	8	5%
Minimal training	8	5%
Prior tutoring experience	6	4%
Not prepared to deal with these students (refer to support centers)	5	3%
Should not need to be prepared (students do not belong in higher ed)	4	3%
Colleagues	4	3%
Fair	2	1%
Need more information on how to help	2	1%

Note. Not all respondents chose to answer this question

In order to understand the professional development needs of higher education faculty, item 29 asked respondents to describe what they perceived were the most important instructional needs that faculty have when working with students who struggle with reading and writing. Better training in instructional strategies/pedagogy for faculty ranked as the number one answer with 13% of respondents mentioning it (see Table 27). The overall feeling of faculty about the need for more training is reflected well in this comment:

•Training and recognizing students who may have poor skill. I know I have had students come to me and say they don't understand the readings or assignments that I don't see as complex or high level. I don't know how to address this except to refer them elsewhere.

Table 27.

Results from Item 29 - What do you perceive to be the chief instructional need for faculty in working with students' experiencing reading and writing difficulties?

(144 respondents)

Response	#	%
Better training in instructional strategies/pedagogy for faculty	18	13%
More well-trained support staff	10	7%
Better training on how to spot characteristics of these students	9	6%
Faculty patience, sensitivity, ability to encourage (not criticize)	9	6%
Specialized academic support services for vulnerable students	8	6%
More time	8	6%
Access to materials and resources	7	5%
Tutorial services for vulnerable students	7	5%
Institutional requirements that vulnerable students seek help	7	5%
This is not faculty's responsibility	6	4%
Faculty awareness that being "vulnerable" does not equal a low IQ	4	3%
Better collaboration between faculty and support centers	4	3%
Better information on how to make referrals	4	3%
Better training on how to teach reading & writing	3	2%
Faculty awareness of responsibility to teach reading & writing	3	2%
Smaller class size	3	2%
Additional specially-trained faculty	2	1%
Institutional support	2	1%
Resources guide for faculty	2	1%
Receiving information on student before class begins	2	1%

Note. Not all respondents chose to answer this question

When asked to describe the characteristics of academically vulnerable students (item 30), the overwhelming response was weak skills (22% of respondents), followed by high absenteeism/tardiness (19% of respondents), and fear/anxiety/depression and lack of participation on the part of the students (17% of respondents). Many of the responses centered around the students' underdeveloped skills in the areas of reading and writing and/or their lack of

motivation to do well (see Table 28). Comments such as there were repeated throughout the responses:

- *Varies - Learned helplessness, reluctance to self-identify, overachievement, underachievement, lack of willingness to seek help, over-reliance on help.*
- *Slow to take notes, need extra time on tests, or other assignments, or someone to explain the assignments a few times or in a different manner.*
- *Absences, poor scores, frustration leading to worsened performance due, in part, to lower expectations and general in-class distraction.*
- *Apathy, disruptive behavior, general downplaying of the need for education. That's a generality, of course. There are those who are completely the opposite.*

Table 28.

Results from Item 30 - What characteristics are exhibited by academically vulnerable students? (144 respondents)

Response	#	%
Weak skills (reading comprehension, writing, study skills)	32	22%
High absenteeism/tardiness	28	19%
Fear/anxiety/depression/lack of participation	24	17%
Poor scores/performance	22	15%
Overwhelmed/easily frustrated	17	12%
Low self-esteem/low confidence	17	12%
Shy/quiet or outgoing/loud	15	10%
Limited retention skills/lack of focus/attention	11	8%
Lack of motivation	9	6%
Hostile, defensive, resistant, aggressive, isolated	9	6%
Eagerness, persistence, motivated	8	6%
Organizational issues	8	6%
Sense of entitlement	7	5%
Gives up easily/apathetic	6	4%
Lack of background knowledge/underprepared	5	3%
Difficulty with college environment/professional boundaries	4	3%
Language barriers	2	1%
Undiagnosed dyslexia	2	1%
Denial of vulnerability	2	1%
Ability to think out of the box	2	1%

Note. Not all respondents chose to answer this question

Summary of Analysis of Qualitative Data

Faculty were asked to respond in their own words to five questions that focused on a) barriers faced in working with academically vulnerable students, b) what frustrations they experienced, c) how well prepared they are in working with academically vulnerable students, d) what their chief instructional needs were, and e) how they would describe the characteristics of academically vulnerable students.

In all questions, except for the last one which focused on the characteristics, lack of time was the most often listed response. Comments included:

- Time restraints*
- Takes time from teaching what I need to teach when they should already have those skills.*
- Time is always an issue. I teach upper level courses, and if students haven't been identified by this point, they are unlikely to be successful. On the other hand, if the student is already following a plan developed at a lower level, I am happy to continue this in my courses.*
- Trying to balance all of my responsibilities of classroom instruction, preparation, advisement, and university committee work I don't have time to tutor them and sometimes they have great difficulty with assignments.*

Class size and student resistance were other repeated responses. Some of these responses reflected the theme that academically vulnerable students should not be in college or are not capable of doing the work:

- I have too many students and too little time. In addition, many academically vulnerable students do not work closely with faculty to address their vulnerabilities.*
- The variety of academically vulnerable students can be overwhelming in some instances; some of these students are greatly underprepared and ill-equipped; some students do not have the cognitive ability to do college-level work.*
- The basic skills should have been mastered long ago! Problems should have been addressed earlier in academic career. Academic support services pays lip service to the problem.*
- Many of them have just either a) insufficient average intelligence OR b) their intelligence is not suited to academic pursuits (i.e they may be very good with their hands or with visual thinking - artists, craftspeople, graphic designers, mechanics, etc.), but Shakespeare and Jefferson don't mean a thing to them. In both cases, college is simply not the place for*

them to be; I question whether college is the appropriate choice for them or if there is another option that would utilize their strengths.

A few faculty questioned how students could have graduated from high school:

- I am constantly feeling that these students should never have been allowed to graduate from high school and clearly were passed along to be a problem for someone else.*
- How did they get to be seniors without learning to read and, especially, how to write.*

Many responded that they need more training in order to be able to effectively service academically vulnerable students:

- I have taken some education courses that have helped me to understand some of the issues, but I don't feel that I have received training/knowledge through my role as an instructor.*
- I feel as a faculty member that I need more preparation such as workshops or conferences because I do not feel as prepared as I probably should working with academically vulnerable students.*
- Training opportunities are few and far between at this university. I try to be open minded but I know I need more training.*
- As a licensed clinical psychologist, I feel my training and experience allows me to better understand the needs/concerns of such students, understanding ADA, etc. However, I have not had any formalized preparation/training as to how to best serve these students.*

Others felt that their degree in education has prepared them well and a few felt that their institution offered sufficient training opportunities:

- Very well. . . by my background and experience in public schools. I have taken lots of learning workshops and have been doing this for a very long time. After a while its no big deal.*

A few others did not feel that being trained should be a necessary part of teaching in higher education:

- *I have not been prepared, and I don't think I could be. Remedial education and college-level learning cannot be coterminous in the same class space. I have been "trained" as much as I can be*
- *We have a good supply of support services not only for students, but also workshops for faculty, and the institution cannot entirely reorient itself to academically vulnerable students.*
- *I have NOT been trained.*
- *College students should have IQs above 85, and I have had some who have not. People with SATS of 390 do not belong in regular college classes, and I find that community colleges give them A's and tell them they are wonderful. Our college writing courses give them A's and do the same thing.*

When asked to describe the characteristics of academically vulnerable students, many faculty focused on the students' weak skills, absenteeism and lack of participation:

- *I have found that academically vulnerable students show a severe lack of determination to "follow through" with things, which is evidenced by poor attendance or failing to turn in assignments, even assignments that I saw them partially complete during class time. I think they are also highly lacking in confidence. It is often the case that these students fall behind at some point in the semester. I typically try to get in touch with them to offer help (either from myself or another dept on campus). Of those that accept help, a few carry through with the hard work of catching up and are able to succeed based on that help and encouragement. Others accept help initially, but again fail to follow through*
- *Varies widely. Limited vocabulary; limited ability to draw conclusions; difficulties with analysis; lowest levels of Piaget and Perry scales; low confidence, lack of academic direction, poor attendance.*
- *Poor class attendance, reluctant to take time outside of class to get help, reluctant to participate in class discussion, often does not complete written assignments.*

A few other faculty looked at the behaviors that can be both causes and symptoms of being academically vulnerable when listing characteristics:

- Poor class attendance, reluctant to take time outside of class to get help.*
- Reluctant to participate in class discussion, often does not complete written assignments.*
- Often they seem to lack confidence in their abilities, perhaps because of past difficulties, and some seem to use their difficulties to excuse things like ordinary procrastination. Otherwise, they are as similar and as diverse as all of the other students.*
- Lack self-confidence, unaware of available help, feeling “other-ized” in the classroom; poor class attendance, poor writing abilities.*

A few faculty responses indicated their understanding that the characteristics of an academically vulnerable student can be difficult to define because its impact is individualistic. This was stated very well in this response:

- No commonality. ..each one is an individual and should be treated as such.*

One very clear theme became evident throughout the responses to the open-ended questions: faculty are concerned about the quality of learning that students achieve, regardless of whether they are academically vulnerable or more traditional. The analysis of the comments indicated a level of frustration on the part of some faculty concerning both the lack of preparation they have received and the lack of effort or motivation offered by the students themselves.

In Chapter five, the summary, conclusions and recommendations for further research will be discussed.

Chapter 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The purpose of this study was to answer the question: Are college faculty adequately prepared to offer assistance to academically vulnerable students who experience reading and writing difficulties? It is important to make the distinction between an at-risk and an academically vulnerable student. At-risk students may have issues beyond education that influence their classification of at-risk, including but not limited to, race, socio-economic status, and disability. Vivian (2005) defines at-risk college students as “those who are socially, financially, or academically underprepared or under supported” (p. 336). For the purpose of this study, the researcher chose to define academically vulnerable students by adapting a definition applied to struggling students by Foushee & Sleigh (n.d.). This definition defines these students as displaying poor performance on class assignments and exams and whose performance may be inconsistent, though they attend class regularly and desire to be successful. More specifically, the definition used for this research focuses on students who struggle with reading and writing at a level needed to succeed in a college classroom.

As discussed in chapters one and two, students with dyslexia exhibit similar characteristics and respond to the same instructional techniques as those determined to be academically vulnerable. However, due to the severity of symptoms presented by students with diagnosed dyslexia and because of their eligibility for services from the Office of Disabilities these students fall outside of

the target range of this study and were therefore omitted. It is recommended that similar research be completed in the future which examines faculty attitudes and knowledge concerning students with dyslexia.

The intent of the survey was to gauge faculty perception concerning their role and perceived responsibility in educating academically vulnerable students. This study utilized an electronic survey which was sent to six colleges and universities in northwestern Pennsylvania. One hundred eighty-two faculty responded, encompassing members of every discipline, faculty rank, and years teaching that spanned one year to 42 years. Data were filtered to remove incomplete responses. Data from the remaining respondents, who answered at least 80 percent of the survey, were analyzed using frequency and Chi Square statistical analysis. Qualitative data were analyzed using inductive analysis.

Responses were evaluated against four subquestions which focused on determining how responsible faculty perceived they were in assisting academically vulnerable students; how well prepared faculty felt they were in offering this assistance; how well faculty could identify academically vulnerable students; and whether gender, discipline, or number of years of experience had an impact on faculty perception.

The following discussion summarizes the findings in this study as defined by the four subquestions and includes a brief summary of the open-ended qualitative data.

Research Subquestion 1

The findings related to subquestion 1 which looked at faculty's overall perception of responsibility in offering assistance to academically vulnerable students were polarized, with 80 percent stating that faculty play a vital role in meeting the educational needs of academically vulnerable students and 78 percent responded that providing assistance was consistent with good pedagogy. Yet, 82 percent of faculty stated that the responsibility of assisting academically vulnerable students should fall to the institution's learning center. These findings are similar to those of a study (Kozeracki, 2002) which reviewed the conclusions of three national studies and found that 80 percent of faculty in four-year colleges indicated they were "strongly interested in the academic problems of undergraduate students" (p. 50). The implication is that an unarticulated barrier exists between faculty's understanding of their role as an educational leader and their desire or ability to implement the assistance needed for academically vulnerable students' success.

Research Subquestion 2

Meeting the needs of academically vulnerable students requires an understanding of the diverse learning styles that can be present in a classroom. In addition, it is imperative to understand what instructional strategies can be employed to address students whose learning styles fall outside of the norm. Responses to survey items designed to ascertain whether faculty felt they were prepared to assist academically vulnerable students revealed that the respondents were split over this issue. Approximately half of the faculty (51%)

thought their institution provided adequate training, and slightly more (59%) felt they had sufficient background in educational methods. Although on-the-job learning is not a negative practice, it is found naturally in the “hidden curriculum” (Knight, 2006, p. 33). Higher education institutions need to offer professional development that is explicit and strategic if working with academically vulnerable college students is to be successful. Analysis of these results suggests that half of faculty could benefit from further professional development training in effective instructional strategies and best classroom practices.

Research Subquestion 3

Identification of an academically vulnerable student can be difficult due to the fact that there is no consistency between how vulnerability presents itself. A student may be a slow reader, but have excellent writing skills. Another student may be an average reader, but struggle to put his thoughts on paper. Some students will present poor study skills and time management techniques, while others may have no problems with either, yet struggle to complete assignments.

The findings in this section of the study reveal that 55 percent of the faculty felt they were capable of identifying the characteristics of an academically vulnerable student. Twenty-nine of the respondents (17%) stated that they agree a low IQ is a characteristic of academically vulnerable students who struggle with reading and writing. An interesting, yet inexplicable, finding was found in connection with this question when gender was correlated. It was found that of the 29 respondents who believed a low IQ was a characteristic, 19 were male. Along with the more obvious warning signs of weak reading, writing, study and

comprehension skills offered in item 30, a few faculty mentioned the paradox of trying to generalize the characteristics of academically vulnerable students. The following comment states this challenge efficiently:

•Shyness, lower self-esteem and a lack of confidence in their abilities, blustery defensiveness, hardworking perseverance, manipulative, insightful about social issues, caring, academically dishonest or lazy, obsessed with getting the points, whining about the difficulty of an assignment, tackling schoolwork head on and proud of achievements---- These and many other characteristics appear in one or another student. Actually, they are not that different than all students at some point in an academic career. They just need the resources that will make a difference in their overall success.

Because reading and writing difficulties are not visible initially and may not become apparent until the student fails an exam or major project, faculty may be unaware of the need until the student is at a deficit. These students often go unnoticed until they withdraw from college because faculty are unable to detect that there is a problem (Beck & Davidson, 2001).

Research Subquestion 4

Prior research indicated that gender, age, teaching experience, faculty status, and academic rank may play a role in faculty attitudes toward working with underprepared students (Vogel, Burgstahler, Sligar, & Zecker, 2006; Johnson, 2006). In order to gauge if these factors would impact the results of this study, a correlation of demographic responses and survey results was conducted.

Review of the findings in reference to the effect gender, discipline, and years of experience had on faculty responses to the previous subquestions revealed that gender and years of experience had limited impact. There were a

few correlations of note, particularly that of the number of years of teaching experience and their response to providing out-of-class assistance to academically vulnerable students. It was found that faculty who have taught 30-50 years accepted their role as educational mentor with an overwhelming response of 74 percent stating they would provide out of class assistance. Only 29 percent of the faculty in the 10-19 year range stated they would be willing to do so. It might be inferred from these data that the more years of teaching experience, the more they become attuned to the role they play in addressing the individual needs of their students outside the classroom.

In related results, 79 percent of the 20-29 year range stated that there were times they would not provide assistance to academically vulnerable students as compared to only 53-59 percent of faculty in the other groups who agreed with this statement.

Faculty in higher education institutions come from a wide range of backgrounds, education, and experiences (Scott & Gregg, 2000). Many faculty members are skilled in their discipline, having worked for years in their field, but have little or no professional development in teacher education (Burgstahler & Doe, 2006; McShannon & Hynes, 2005; Scott & Gregg, 2000). In order to ascertain what impact a faculty's specific discipline had on faculty responses, data were coded into two groups: Education faculty ($n=21$) and Other Discipline faculty ($n=148$). These data presented fascinating results. Considering the amount of training in teaching strategies teachers must undergo in gaining their teaching certificate, it was not surprising that 81 percent of Education faculty

responded that they had sufficient background in the educational methods needed for working with academically vulnerable students. In contrast, only 59 percent of Other Discipline faculty felt that they had sufficient background.

Regardless of discipline, the job of college instructor requires faculty to utilize research-based teaching strategies to instruct all students. Educators at all levels need to be trained in understanding how to use these strategies to ensure student achievement (Lavoie, 2006). Therefore, the statistic that 38 percent of the total faculty respondents ($n=59$ Other Discipline and $n=4$ Education) do not feel as if they have sufficient training in educational methods to teach struggling students is alarming. These findings were further supported by faculty comments in the qualitative section of the survey. Thirty-nine respondents (27%) stated they had no formal training in how to deal with academically vulnerable students. Three percent of the respondents felt they were not prepared well and preferred to refer struggling students to the support centers. Several faculty indicated praise for educational support services, while many more were frustrated by the lack of consistency and communication between faculty and support staff. This was evident in the following comments regarding frustrations in working with academically vulnerable students:

- Finally lack of coordination with student support service programs and academic faculty.*
- Inadequate tutorial assistance on campus.*
- University resources are limited. Student tutors are undertrained.*
- When students' academic support advisors insist on assisting students their way rather than encouraging students to seek out support from profs.*

The assumption is that profs are clueless & they know better - often to the detriment of students.

One of the most revealing findings involved the question asking faculty if they felt making accommodations for academically vulnerable students decreased the effectiveness of their teaching. As might be expected, Education faculty recognized that making accommodations for struggling students can actually sharpen their teaching skills. This was evident in the fact that 81 percent of Education faculty disagreed with that statement. However, analysis of the responses from the Other Discipline faculty showed that 41 percent of respondents replied that making accommodations did decrease their teaching effectiveness. The researcher speculates that this may come from the misunderstanding that making accommodations for a student's learning needs is equal to "dumbing down" the curriculum. This view is supported in the following faculty responses:

•When information has to be diluted (dumbed down) to accommodate the slowest learners, the typical students in the class are not challenged enough.

•Dealing with these problems means that I am unable to teach the course material at a level and to a depth that is appropriate for college level knowledge... Throughout my 32 years of teaching, I have constantly been forced to water down my courses as the learning ability of the students has decreased.

Summary of Open-ended Qualitative Data

Five open-ended questions offered faculty the opportunity to express their opinions on the issues of barriers, frustrations, preparedness, instructional needs, and knowledge of working with academically vulnerable students.

Time was the most commonly listed response to the questions concerning barriers and frustrations. Time issues were also considered an instructional need. The demands on college faculty to produce research and publish leave little time for concentrating on their own professional development needs (Erklenz-Watts, Westbay & Lynd-Balta, 2006). Concerns expressed by faculty in this study were that institutional requirements, specifically the advising and tenure obligations, made having time available to tutor students difficult. Comments similar to this one were recurrent:

•Trying to balance all my responsibilities of classroom instruction, preparation, advisement, and university committee work.

The ability to recognize that a student is struggling and being prepared to assist that student is a crucial component of being a teacher at any level. Twenty-seven percent of faculty reported that they had received no formal training in how to work with academically vulnerable students. Another 6 percent indicated fair to minimal training. These data support the need for postsecondary institutions to provide quality professional development for faculty a high priority. In-service training, such as the workshops and webinars offered through the centers for teaching and learning at higher education institutions, have a direct, positive impact on faculty knowledge and attitude (Scott & Gregg, 2000). These centers can offer faculty one-on-one consultation sessions, peer observations, campus-wide training, and assistance with classroom instruction at times which are convenient for faculty. Struggling students will experience many barriers

related to their college experience. Lack of support from college administrators, faculty, and staff should not be one of them.

Conclusions

Academically vulnerable students may not constitute the majority of the higher education student population, but they are becoming a larger component than ever before in classrooms across the country (Perin, 2006; Spann, 2000). Support centers and tutoring services are not equipped to handle the volume of students nor the types of needs academically vulnerable students demand (Huse, Wright, Clark & Hacker, 2005; Donnelly, 2000). Due to funding and staff limitations, support centers train tutors to address subject matter for the courses that have the highest tutoring requests. This typically results in tutors who are trained to support students enrolled in those courses, not those struggling with reading and writing skills.

With support centers ill-equipped to handle the needs of academically vulnerable students, the responsibility is left in the hands of faculty. Are college faculty adequately prepared to offer assistance to academically vulnerable students who struggle with reading and writing? The results of this study indicate that more professional development on instructional techniques and methods for working with these students is needed. Faculty responses indicated that there are still misconceptions about the abilities and skills of students who are academically vulnerable. Comments stating that these students have a low IQ, are lazy, unmotivated, or incapable of learning at a college level are outdated and misleading.

There appears to be an underlying tone in many of the responses found in this study that indicate faculty equate the ability to read and write with intelligence. Reading is a complex skill that is not innate. Reading and writing were invented through human ingenuity and the brain has the ability to learn and decipher the code, but to assume that reading ability is paramount to all *learning* is erroneous. A person can struggle with reading without it affecting intellectual abilities such as “thinking, reasoning, or understanding” (Shaywitz, 2003, p. 36).

Learning is something that happens in many ways and in different settings. Delivering a lecture and requiring students to read copious amounts of material is one method, but that method will not work for all students (Grover & Hendricks, n.d.). Instructional techniques that incorporate hands-on, experiential methods will result in much the same learning as reading and writing activities. In the end, is it the goal of higher education to know how much a student understands about a topic or how well they can read about it?

The frustrations that faculty feel, as revealed in comments offered in this study, might be alleviated through professional development trainings. Faculty need to be trained on how to better recognize students’ needs and use instructional strategies which allow students to show their learning without heavy reliance on reading and writing.

Many colleges and universities have begun to incorporate learning opportunities for faculty into their institutional programs through the use of programs such as Centers for Teaching and Learning which provide faculty professional development in-house. Along with providing faculty with additional

professional development, a mutually acceptable solution may be found in the concept of Supplemental Instruction. This method of assisting struggling students has been successful in “community colleges, liberal arts colleges, research institutions, urban-metropolitan universities, rural universities, professional schools, graduate schools, medical schools, and international schools” across the country (Jacobs, Stone, & Stout, 2006, p. 96). Originally started at the University of Missouri-Kansas City, for the past four decades Supplemental Instruction has involved offering academic assistance for college students and collaboration with faculty in helping to support and retain students (Jacobs, et al., 2006). Traditionally, Supplemental Instruction utilizes a peer-facilitation model in which a student who was previously highly successful in a historically difficult course becomes a learning assistant or student leader for students currently taking that course (kennesaw.edu). These student leaders collaborate with faculty to offer learning or study sessions that help students enhance their understanding of the material in an informal setting. This program could be modified to include student leaders who focus on enhancing the reading and writing skills of academically vulnerable students.

Combining professional development for faculty focused on increasing knowledge and improving instructional strategies with a program like Supplemental Instruction, would allow faculty to be better prepared to meet the needs of all students not just those who are academically vulnerable.

Finally, findings from the study indicate that there needs to be a more collaborative approach to offering students assistance. Comments such as the

ones below indicate that there is disconnect between faculty, students, and academic support services.

•I don't believe our university has a coherent program. Most universities appear oblivious to the magnitude of the problem.

•Inadequate tutorial assistance on campus

•There should be a better approach to screening students and to supporting them within a course vs in detached remedial centers.

•Lack of support services providing the necessary services to students that they say they provide and these services not taking an active role to engage the student so that they are willing to take advantage of the services. Finally lack of coordination with student support service programs and academic faculty.

Ultimately, this study found that gaps exist between faculty perceptions of their role in working with academically vulnerable students and the implementation of assistance needed by this student population. While this research offers some insight into faculty beliefs, further study is needed to understand how to progress toward providing the professional development that faculty need to successfully meet the needs of academically vulnerable students in their classrooms.

Recommendations

The findings from this study were limited to faculty from six colleges and universities in northwestern Pennsylvania, therefore a study with a larger sample base would allow the data to be applied more generally. The addition of individual interviews would provide another level of insight and would offer faculty the ability to elaborate on their responses in more detail than an electronic survey alone can provide.

This study indicated that relying on colleagues and mentors was the second most often chosen method of increasing knowledge about academically vulnerable students ($n=125$). Thus, this researcher recommends the implementation of Professional Learning Communities as a component of professional development in higher education specifically focused on the issue of academically vulnerable students. Professional Learning Communities are defined as “a powerful staff development approach and a potent strategy for school change and improvement” (Hord, 1997, para 3). Professional Learning Communities can be established by any faculty who desire to work collaboratively with their peers to increase their knowledge on any topic. In the case of academically vulnerable students, these learning communities could focus on identifying characteristics, researching instructional techniques, designing curriculum, and enhancing student learning.

Many colleges and universities have developed extensive online networks and should consider utilizing this technology to create a faculty forum which provides tips and answers to frequently asked questions (FAQs) for faculty who seek further information. This would have far reaching capabilities and such concepts as early identification and effective instructional techniques for academically vulnerable students could be researched at faculty’s convenience.

The study found that many faculty felt collaboration among departments is lacking. The advising department is a great resource for faculty and would be a good place for institutions to begin bridging that gap. Faculty may work closely with the advising department to develop a needs assessment to identify topics

appropriate for professional development workshops (Heisserer & Parette, 2002). In addition, the staff from the advising department could help faculty develop comprehensive learning plans for struggling students. These plans are designed to identify areas of need before they become an obstacle in the classroom. Depending upon the needs of the faculty, advising department staff could further be of assistance by visiting new faculty members within the first semester to discuss issues such as those seen with academically vulnerable students with new faculty.

Newly hired faculty face a significant learning curve upon entering higher education. Therefore, it may take time before they are familiar with the variety of services available for both themselves and their students. As a result, new faculty may not realize their role or the institution's role in identifying and aiding struggling students. Institutions need to include training on instructional practices in new hire workshops and orientations as well as provide continued support during the first year of employment. This might include assistance from the Advising Department and Student Services Department in the form of mentoring between trained staff and new faculty. A mentor could be made available to provide assistance by addressing faculty needs and questions on a one-to-one basis.

Professional development workshops that are known to be successful with adult readers: explicit or direction instruction, strategy instruction, scaffolding, active engagement, and structured instruction (McShane, 2005) could be implemented. Research has shown cooperative learning to be a successful tool

that promotes achievement, encourages problem-solving skills and creates course-related support system for students (Johnson, 1992). Training on effective uses for cooperative learning could benefit the professor and student by making learning more interactive for both. “Breaking up lectures with short cooperative processing times gives the instructor slightly less lecture time but enhances what is learned and builds relationships among students. It helps counter what is proclaimed as the main problem of lectures: The information passes from the notes of the professor to the notes of the student without passing through the mind of either one” (Johnson, 1992).

Further study into how professional development impacts the instructional practices of faculty would be of benefit to higher education as it moves forward in developing centers of teaching and learning. A study of these factors would assist the directors in these centers to offer workshops and trainings that meet the needs of faculty in both education and non-education disciplines.

Finally, the relationship between faculty perceptions toward working with academically vulnerable students and their role as faculty mentors needs to be studied in order to determine how these two factors can be effectively addressed through professional development.

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Appendix A

Attached Message

From: Tara Joyce <tjoyce@mtsu.edu>
To: rlq725@aol.com
Subject: Re: teacher ed. reports
Date: Mon, 30 Apr 2007 16:43:18 -0500

Hello Robin,

You have my permission to use the 4 questions from the survey I conducted which was referenced in the white paper that is posted on the Tennessee Center for the Study & Treatment of Dyslexia at MTSU website, as long as you cite the paper as it is on our website (including the title, my name, the Center, the year, etc.).

Good luck with your work! I look forward to reading your results.

Tara

M. Tara Joyce, Ed.D.
Coordinator of Adolescent Services & Adult Resources
Tennessee Center for the Study & Treatment of Dyslexia
Middle Tennessee State University

----- Original Message -----

From: dbourque00@comcast.net
To: [Robin Quick](#)
Sent: Tuesday, March 20, 2007 8:45 AM
Subject: Re: dissertation inquiry

Dear Robin,

Yes, I am willing to have you administer my survey, as long as you provide credit to the original. I would suggest a statement such as "adapted from "Assessment of Faculty Attitudes and Beliefs Toward Accommodation for Students with Disabilities" by Diane L. Bourque, Ed.D".

Forward the approval form to me via e-mail or mail using the address below and I will complete it and return to you. I am interested in your study and willing to have a conversation about the topic, my work, the dissertation experience (!), or help in any way that might be useful to you.

Best of luck with this important work!
Keep me posted,

Diane

Diane L. Bourque, Ed.D.
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Appendix B - Site Approval Consent Form

Before agreeing to grant site approval for this research study, it is important that you read and understand the following explanation of the purpose and benefits of the study and how it will be conducted.

Title of Study: An investigation of faculty knowledge and perceptions toward college students with reading and writing difficulties.

Principal Investigator: Robin L. Quick, Doctoral Candidate, Indiana University of Pennsylvania

Department: Professional Studies in Education

Purpose of the Study: Faculty members are being asked to participate in a research study which involves examining faculty knowledge and perceptions toward working with college students who are experiencing reading and writing difficulties.

Study Procedures: Faculty members are being asked to complete a questionnaire featuring 9 demographic, 16 Likert-scale, and 5 open-ended questions that will take approximately 20 minutes of their time.

Benefits and Risks to the Participants: Benefits include adding to the body of knowledge currently available on professional development for postsecondary faculty, as well as allowing for self-reflection on the participant's own personal pedagogy concerning students with reading and writing difficulties. No potential risks are anticipated as participation is voluntary and the participants will be identified by case number, not by institution.

Compensation for Participants: No compensation is being offered for participation.

Procedures for Maintaining Confidentiality of Research Records: Survey respondents will be assigned a case number to conceal the identity of the participants and complete confidentiality will be maintained by the researcher. All questionnaires, data results, and other relevant materials will be retained for a period of at least three calendar years in a locked cabinet in the researcher's office.

Questions about the Study: If you have any questions about the study, you may contact Robin L. Quick at 814-825-7326.

- Your signature below indicates that the purpose, design, benefits, and potential risks of this study have been supplied to you and you approve of the study being conducted at this institution.

Printed Name

Institution

Signature

Date

Appendix C

Dear Professor:

Please read the following message and then click on this link to take the survey: <http://studentvoice.com/AcademicVulnerabilityRQ> (Pilot study results indicated the average time to take the survey was 10 minutes.)

You are invited to participate in a dissertation survey. The project is being conducted by Robin Quick, a doctoral candidate from Indiana University of Pennsylvania. The purpose of this study is to examine faculty knowledge and perceptions toward working with college students who are academically vulnerable.

It has been estimated that 25-30% of all students enrolling in college are underprepared for the demands of higher education (Perin, 2006; Spann, 2000). Statistically, 49 percent of students taking the ACT did not score at a level high enough to indicate readiness for college level reading (ACT.org, 2006). These students struggle with the demands of higher education in the areas of reading, writing, and math (Perin, 2004).

The advanced skill requirements and increased pacing of college coursework can pose major barriers to students who lack solid reading and writing skills (Scherer, 2007; McKeachie, 2006). These students may have difficulty taking notes, processing auditory and written information, and have poor writing and spelling skills. For the purpose of this study, the term “academically vulnerable” will be used to represent these students.

As a faculty member from a northwestern Pennsylvania college or university, your participation and feedback are crucial to the success of this research. Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. There is no penalty for not participating in this study. Your response will be numerically coded to ensure anonymity and the findings of the study will be reported in aggregate data. Confidentiality will be maintained throughout. This project has been approved by the Indiana University of Pennsylvania Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (Phone: 724/357-7730).

Please complete and return survey by May 12, 2008.

Respectfully,

Robin L. Quick, Doctoral Candidate
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Erie, PA 16509
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RLQ725@aol.com

Dr. George Bieger, Faculty Sponsor
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Appendix D

Directions: Please place a checkmark next to your response or fill in the blank.

1. Gender: Female Male
2. Title/Rank:
 Instructor Assistant Professor Associate Professor Professor
3. Type of institution: Public Private State-Related
4. Tenure status: Tenured Non-Tenured
5. Years of teaching experience in higher education _____# years.
6. Discipline (please specify): _____
7. What resources have you used to increase your knowledge concerning academically vulnerable students?
 Office of Disability Services Workshop Online disability resources
 Faculty Resource Guide Newsletters Colleagues/mentors
 Learning Assistance Center Video Other (specify): _____
8. Does your institution have a Center for Teaching and Learning or equivalent professional development center? Yes No
9. Have you received adequate training from your institution regarding the provision of assistance to academically vulnerable students? Yes No

Directions: The following statements make use of a rating scale with 6 places; circle the rating that best describes your opinion.

- | | | Agree | | | | Disagree |
|---|---|-------|---|---|---|----------|
| 10. Providing assistance to academically vulnerable students falls under the responsibilities of the university's learning centers..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 11. Providing assistance to academically vulnerable students requires an unreasonable amount of additional work for faculty..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 12. Academically vulnerable students generally have below average intelligence..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 13. Providing assistance to academically vulnerable students is consistent with good pedagogy..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 14. Providing assistance to academically vulnerable students does not prepare students for real work/career responsibilities or requirements..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 15. Providing assistance to academically vulnerable students creates an unfair advantage for those students..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 16. Providing assistance to academically vulnerable students penalizes students without difficulties..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

	Agree						Disagree
17. I have sufficient background in educational methods to be an effective instructor of academically vulnerable students	1	2	3	4	5	6	
18. The time required to prepare alternate instructional and examination methods takes faculty away from other scholarly activities which are vital to tenure and promotion.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	
19. My training has adequately prepared me to identify the characteristics of an academically vulnerable student.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	
20. Academically vulnerable students should attend a community college before enrolling in a 4 year institution.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	
21. I make every effort to provide outside of class assistance to academically vulnerable students	1	2	3	4	5	6	
22. Providing out of class assistance to students with reading and writing difficulties falls under the responsibility of faculty.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	
23. The need to accommodate for academically vulnerable students decreases my own teaching effectiveness.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	
24. There are some occasions when I would NOT provide assistance to an academically vulnerable student.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	
25. Faculty members have a vital role to play in meeting the educational needs of academically vulnerable students	1	2	3	4	5	6	

Please complete the following open-ended questions by typing in your response.

1. What barriers do you face in getting effective instruction for academically vulnerable students in your class?

2. What are your frustrations in teaching students with reading and writing difficulties?

3. To what extent have you been prepared to serve the students you teach who are academically vulnerable? Please explain your answer.

4. What do you perceive to be the chief instructional need for faculty in working with students' experiencing reading and writing difficulties?

5. What characteristics are exhibited by academically vulnerable students?

Appendix E

Respondent ID	Q26 Open Text - What barriers do you face in getting effective instruction for academically vulnerable students in your class?
4632767	The students' own lack of motivation, interest in improvement, and concern for their future are the biggest barriers. Plenty of help exists, and plenty of opportunities for improvement. Many just don't care. And why should they? They're making minimum wage at WalMart; what could be better?
4632774	Their own failures to seek out extra help are their worst problems.
4632778	Usually, their willingness to communicate and to request such help.
4632788	Time
4632803	Students' self-defeating behaviors (not asking for assistance, skipping class, not following through on scheduled appointments).
4632805	Most of these students are not motivated to be here. They aren't mature enough or don't necessarily want a degree at this time in their lives. So sometimes they don't use the abilities they have or don't know they have those abilities.
4632865	Limited knowledge of techniques and how to apply these in (and out) of the classroom.
4632961	I believe they should be prepared for study by the time I get them in class. (I do not teach freshmen)
4633018	Having more than a limited number of academically vulnerable students.
4633039	Paperwork, institutional hoops
4633072	Students' willingness to acknowledge learning difficulties.
4633084	Need to demonstrate rigor in classes
4633191	Time is always an issue. I teach upper level courses, and if students haven't been identified by this point, they are unlikely to be successful. On the other hand, if the student is already following a plan developed at a lower level, I am happy to continue this in my courses.
4633414	students do not identify themselves as academically vulnerable until too late students do not follow through with suggestions to go to academic support services
4633649	just knowing up front who needs the help.
4633653	I am not informed about types of limitations that students might face, such as types of autism. Nor am I instructed in how to accommodate them.
4633675	time
4634141	More than anything, they rarely come forward and communicate that they are having difficulty. It is hard to separate the student who is having real issues from those who are just not doing the work.
4634491	Time Materials Other students verbalizing unfairness
4634784	time
4634947	They often don't show up or exhibit objectionable behavior in class. Also, while some are simply unprepared, many should not be in college at all.
4635228	Often they don't take advantage of resources that are available.

4635263	often cannot identify such students until it is too late. few will approach the instructor on their own.
4635776	Cost for supplies to help these students
4635806	The large numbers of them, and the variety of difficulties.
4635840	The wide margin of student abilities.
4638203	I feel none
4638308	Occasionally we will have an academically vulnerable student who also carries social issues and does not act scholarly in the classroom.
4639584	The students' attitudes.
4646610	When information has to be diluted (dumbed down) to accommodate the slowest learners, the typical students in the class are not challenged enough.
4650260	Apparent student apathy (for whatever reason) Obtaining appropriate assistance from those who are supposed to know how
4650523	text books are not always available in alternate format (audio, large print, etc.) On-line instruction materials do not always allow for accommodations.
4663397	Trying to balance the all my responsibilities of classroom instruction, preparation, advisement, and university committee work.
4663443	Not knowing what adaptations the academically vulnerable students need in my classroom.
4666162	none
4673163	Time restraints
4673993	time constraints to develop
4676805	Distance. . . so much is done electronically.
4677723	time constraints in lecture. Amount of material that must be presented in the allotted time.
4682574	sometimes I don't know who they are or they don't know how best they learn
4697763	In my department I see no barriers
4697766	Either the students refuse to self-identify (haven't been tested) or they choose NOT to use accommodations.
4698057	Having the students themselves express their needs.
4698100	There is really no one addressing this issue at our university. In our rush to increase enrollment, we have students coming in with SATS of less than 400 in writing. I cannot address this in my classes. No way. No time, not my job.
4698109	Some skills we teach are time sensitive and require quick, immediate and appropriate responses.
4698162	Many of them don't see the necessity of coming to class regularly. This compounds their difficulty.
4698173	large class sizes so I don't always recognize the students if they don't approach me first
4698222	I do not always know who these students are -- often they are identified at the end of the semester.

4698251	larger classes make individual attention difficult
4698266	It is often unclear what their “vulnerability” is until too late (if ever) to take appropriate action or employ appropriate strategies.
4698399	Not aware of any
4698486	None
4698550	The students themselves; they do not believe that they have deficiencies and are hostile to assistance. They often tell me that nothing is wrong with their writing and that I am “too nitpicky” and that these things don't matter! (yet they are preparing to be teachers!)
4698868	Many don't seek me out until there are problems that have to be resolved.
4698968	Have not referred any students. Students taking chemistry generally wouldn't fall under the common definitions of “academically vulnerable” even though their reading/writing skills may be sub-par for studying the physical sciences
4699035	I don't know.
4699798	Proper identification
4699858	I have found that finding something to be successful at, like a drawing class, gives the student something to build on. But, finding that thing can be difficult. In my classes students are rarely asked to read or write, but they often have a checkered academic career, so I try to use the success in art to give them a base. Barriers are finding classes and teachers that are patient enough or at least willing to give some extra help or time.
4700993	This semester I have 16 students identified with some time type of disability. It is impossible to accommodate all their needs within one class period. Often students do not communicate effectively what they need or what works for them because they don't want to be seen as “different.”
4701607	Their desire to have everything instantly. It might take time to make accommodations and I need more than 24 hours.
4701623	I don't have time to tutor them and sometimes they have great difficulty with assignments.
4702325	Students willingness for assistance
4702783	Knowing how to effectively assist these students
4704135	I have too many students and too little time. In addition, many academically vulnerable students do not work closely with faculty to address their vulnerabilities.
4709159	University resources are limited. Student tutors are undertrained.
4710482	Students seem willing to be identified as 'vulnerable' in order to get special situations such as turning in late assignments, preferential seating, etc. but are then unwilling to follow-up with help from the appropriate office in preparation for those assignments and exams. If they are allowed one, they ought to follow through on all of it, or lose the privilege.
4711065	You need to better define “academically vulnerable” But there are some students who just do not grasp the most basic information.
4711782	knowledge base

4712141	Largely their own attitudes. They think very negatively of themselves and it seems to sap all their energy, draining their desire to remediate
4712462	Time constraints and fear of additional workload
4745034	It is difficult to find tutors for the classes that I teach. Also, students who are underprepared are sometimes lumped together with students who have structural issues such as specific learning disabilities or mental illness. Each group requires different methods of assistance and accommodation but this is not handled effectively by the administration. Striking an ethical balance between the privacy rights of students and the need for instructors to know more about the underlying issues specific students face has yet to be achieved. It is difficult to help someone when all I know about the person is that he or she should sit in the front of the room, may need a notetaker, or needs to take the exam in a controlled environment. Some students come forward for assistance, some are embarrassed to be asked about it (in private of course), and some students are very manipulative of the instructor and the resources that are available. Sorting this all out requires much effort. Many faculty have a 60-70 hour work week as it is. Without adequate training and support, the situation is not supportive to everyone involved--including the caring people in the resource center. This barrier may be the most difficult to overcome.
4767499	Class size
4776976	They don't seem to care.
4777169	Not many.
4777243	I face few barriers. These students, however often have no idea that there are avs.
4783265	Growing class sizes. Our class sizes are established by the fire marshal's maximum occupancy limits.
4783347	Large class sizes.
4785434	no barriers so far. Office of Student Disabilities provides resources that are excellent and counseling for students in need of it.
4785442	Students do not always self-identify so that accommodation can be made.
4795308	Time
4795452	The wide range of abilities of students in most classes (keeping the better engaged while making material available to the less prepared). Also, many of the vulnerable seem to have had little academic success and have correspondingly low levels of intellectual interest. Thus, these students very often are much more difficult to interest in academic study. In other words, even the things they could do academically they sometimes (it seems more often than other students) do not take the time or trouble to do.
4795571	Student unresponsiveness to inquiries and suggestions
4796662	It is difficult in terms of time to provide adequate assistance to struggling students while still maintaining a pace that is right for the remainder of the class. This extra assistance often has to occur during office hours or other times outside of class. I am often frustrated when a student who

	needs help makes an appointment to see me outside of class for additional assistance and then fails to show up.
4798130	N/A.
4798145	In my large classes, it is difficult to interact outside class with all students. Large classes tend to be lecture classes. My depends on how well motivated is the academically vulnerable student.
4799098	None
4799304	Attitude of students themselves.
4800043	getting qualified persons to work one-on-one with these students.
4800152	Most don't seek assistance on their own, and are reluctant to take it, when offered.
4800561	The major barrier to implementing instructional methodologies for academically vulnerable students is the equally important concern of developing and challenging those students who are more advanced.
4801653	Students have to identify themselves as academically vulnerable and often wait until they are too far behind to ask for help.
4802799	Four separate preparations semesterly limits instructional preparation time and energy. A number of such students in this institution are now and have been historically hostile and resistant to any sort of intervention. Others are frightened and very hesitant to contact any faculty person, perhaps out of direct prior experience, or out of an "industrial culture" of suspicion and distrust of power. Privileged and vulnerable students in my experience tend to also resist assistance, though for somewhat different reasons -- most of which seem to me to be rooted in a fragile sense of personal autonomy. About 10% are willing to show up when invited, are willing to speak briefly after class meetings, are able to invest themselves in the programs of the assistance center's programs.
4808320	None. The university provides many services for student who request assistance.
4812028	No time to meet students for individual instruction
4816893	Large class size!!!! Cultural reluctance, especially in minorities...
4817025	I don't believe our university has a coherent program. Most universities appear oblivious to the magnitude of the problem.
4817104	I copy my notes and provide these to the students.
4817540	I simply do not believe it is my responsibility to do this.
4817854	They do not use the resources available.
4817968	Time - 45 students in a class and 50-60 academic advisees makes working with these kinds of students a challenge to say the least.
4818257	Space and material issues can arise in the studio setting,
4818353	Class sizes are too large. Plus, instruction is most effective if students are all at about the same level. We have plenty of options in courses to take, so the less prepared can take our developmental courses and get the attention they need there.
4821408	I assign material to read. They don't read. I quiz them and test them. They don't read.
4821630	Time; the variety of academically vulnerable students can be

	overwhelming in some instances; some of these students are greatly underprepared and ill-equipped; some students do not have the cognitive ability to do college-level work
4828273	First, identifying which students are in need as they do not always identify themselves, it may take time to discern what specific difficulties they are having, and then how best to create an individualized plan for them.
4828536	getting them to attend class
4828770	Knowing who they are. I have only had one identified in 5 years but I believe several others would have qualified.
4828817	Limited or outdated technology
4828827	Students need to cooperate; they need to see they need help and that I can do that. Many times they do nothing- even when I suggest to them that I will work with them when I set up tutoring sessions, and extra office hours.
4828873	time constraints
4828897	The largest barrier is the broad range of students abilities in almost every class.
4828948	Time
4828960	Time
4828987	Time. There is never enough time to do extra preparation for these students.
4829011	Helping them gain confidence, having them meet with me individually
4829153	None really, the students have access to a very active assistance program. I constantly urge students to see me outside of class time but very few take advantage of this opportunity.
4829226	Students do not take advantage of getting the extra help that they need.
4829293	with large class it is very difficult to both recognize and assist individual students.
4829344	I don't have barriers
4829380	Time. The students own attitudes. Class size- smaller classes make it easier to adjust according to individual students needs
4829458	most of my students do not currently fill out this category because they are junior level education majors and most pass their praxis 1 and have a 3.0 gpa to take the course I teach.
4829559	the university is very accommodating for such students
4829710	lack of resources
4829736	There is not time to do that and cover material
4829846	large class size
4829873	none
4829888	adequate technology for some types of disabilities
4829927	Most barriers are work ethic and maturity. I have watched students flourish in their 3rd and 4th year. I have also watched students fail because they have no work ethic
4829982	Very few mostly the students in willingness to ask for help. Our

	disability services are very competent and collaborates well to help me.
4830029	initially I am not aware of these students therefore I start out with the same level of teaching for all of them
4838523	Primarily my available time and their cooperation. Although I often spend my own free time helping them, many students fail to follow through on my suggestions or further development (such as tutoring or writing center).
4839662	Inadequate tutorial assistance on campus
4849088	When I taught undergraduates, the class size was too large.
4849336	Lack of time and support from collaborating professionals
4856088	Lack of support services providing the necessary services to students that they say they provide and these services not taking an active role to engage the student so that they are willing to take advantage of the services. Finally lack of coordination with student support service programs and academic faculty.
4868532	When students' academic support advisors insist on assisting students their way rather than encouraging students to seek out support from profs. The assumption is that profs are clueless they know better - often to the detriment of students
4868552	large class size
4868586	None
4868591	lack of time lack of campus resources such as writing center staff, tutors, etc.
4868599	Time - 4 course load
4868611	Lack of incentives, both extrinsic intrinsic
4869147	Supplemental resources

Respondent ID	Q27 Open Text - What are your frustrations in teaching students with reading and writing difficulties?
4632767	It's hard to read and understand their written work, and then I have to make a decision: if they get the general idea, do I give them a grade consistent with their understanding of the material, even they can't communicate what they have learned? Are we to allow students to become graduates of our program, of our university, if they can't write worth crap? What does that say about a college degree? Other frustration: see answer to question 26.
4632774	Students' lack of initiative in actually doing the work, i.e., reading the material, especially if it's not "interesting" (i.e., entertaining)
4632778	Their lack of commitment
4632788	IN many cases, they should not be in a college setting, since to paraphrase Gresham's Law, bad students drive out good. We are seeing good students leave and go elsewhere when they perceive themselves to be surrounded by less-than-good students. The good students do not want their learning experience to be compromised. Neither do they want the reputation of their degree (from a school filled with less-than-good students) to be compromised.
4632803	Being expected to make accommodations when they have not been requested. Having the difficulty be used for non-related excuses - having a learning disability does not excuse a lack of attendance.
4632805	Most of these students don't realize they have a problem. They have a hard time admitting that they do. Also see #26
4632865	Not being able to help a student who needs additional assistance. the office of students with disabilities does a good job working with many of these students, but I tend to defer to them probably more than I should.
4632961	I believe it is their responsibility to proofread their work, and to spend sufficient time preparing their writing submissions. They do not.
4633018	The disproportionate additional work it creates.
4633039	Colleges are reluctant to offer remediation. They don't want to force students to take instruction in math, reading, and writing before students advance on to college-level work.
4633072	Don't come for help right away.
4633084	None
4633191	In teaching the sciences, many of us have a language or vocabulary all its own. If students don't have a base in reading and writing in basic English, the language of the sciences is too demanding.
4633414	nursing is a very difficult major and it is difficult to learn while trying to learn basic reading and writing
4633649	Sometimes it is frustrating when they don't ask for help or when I make corrections and they get upset.
4633653	I have to teach the structure of the essay, so I have little time for sentence structure deficiencies, for instance.
4633675	time isn't available

4634141	I question whether college is the appropriate choice for them or if there is another option that would utilize their strengths.
4634491	Takes time from teaching what I need to teach when they should already have those skills
4634784	their personal levels of commitment varies as do other populations
4634947	Most students are not great writers. The hardest thing is to get them to write differently than they speak.
4635228	My classes center on reading and writing. Students with major difficulties have trouble keeping up.
4635263	i have never had difficulties in these areas. cannot relate to their issues.
4635305	How did they get to be seniors without learning to read and, especially, how to write
4635776	None I am very patient
4635806	Students who proclaim they deserve special attention because of special needs, but do not feel it is their responsibility to make a special effort. Students who are unaware, and unwilling to accept the possibility, that they are underprepared.
4635840	I cannot teach at the level I should be teaching at.
4638203	My own patience and time constraints as a parttime instructor
4646610	I am constantly feeling that these students should never have been allowed to graduate from high school and clearly were passed along to be a problem for someone else.
4650260	Reading and writing difficulties, often leading to apparent apathy
4650523	taking time away from other projects to make special exams, assignments, etc.
4654148	They take way too long to complete exams and quizzes in class.
4663397	I'm not adequately trained.
4663443	I believe should utilize OSD (Office of Students with Disabilities) and tutoring services to its fullest extent so that they and the faculty member are able to make the most efficient and beneficial adaptations in the classroom.
4666162	None
4673163	That they haven't been coached/tutored prior to reaching me.
4673993	time needed to meet with them outside of the classroom
4676805	Lack of consistent expectations by peers at the University. . . if everyone demanded good written form (including spelling) it would be easier to insist on this quality.
4677723	most fail to own up to their difficulties and wait till they are academically failing to reveal their learning problems.
4682574	That other professors and learning centers do not take as much responsibility as they should in helping these students. Many times I feel they are shoved on to others so that their problems don't ever get addressed.
4697763	With the classes I teach there are few frustrations presented.
4697766	Their refusal to use the FREE Writing Center on campus. It takes a lot more time to read a paper that is written by someone who is not able to

	construct a sentence.
4698057	Although I understand the emotional issues related to the frustration, I would not know how to teach reading and writing.
4698100	I am a psychologist, not a reading and writing teacher. I can't do this.
4698109	I feel that the high schools did an inadequate job of preparing these students and giving them the skills they need to succeed in college.
4698162	Often these students are unable to benefit from college instruction. Bright students from disadvantaged backgrounds can benefit from college. Some students from disadvantaged backgrounds are admitted to college without any evidence that they are bright enough to succeed. This does them and the college a disservice.
4698173	I actually like the challenge.
4698222	This is a University -- students are supposed to know how to read and write BEFORE they attend college. These skill deficits should have been identified and corrected in K-12. Is this what "no child left behind" really means? Does it mean that we falsely certify students? These students received a high school diploma - a diploma that signified that they could read and write when in fact they are functionally illiterate!
4698251	not enough time to do individualized instruction if they need it
4698266	Dealing with these problems means that I am unable to teach the course material at a level and to a depth that is appropriate for college level knowledge. Students without these vulnerabilities are often deprived of the opportunity to learn at their level and are demotivated and disadvantaged. Throughout my 32 years of teaching, I have constantly been forced to water down my courses as the learning ability and of the students has decreased.
4698399	Seem to have to teach remedial writing skills in 300 and 400 level courses
4698486	None
4698550	I am preparing individuals to be teachers and they lack basic skills-- SHOULD I accommodate for them- how will they be able to function as teachers when they graduate IF I accommodate for them? If they were not preparing for a future when these skills were so vital it would not be as frustrating for me as I am a Reading Specialist and taught "remedial reading" in a K-12 setting for years.
4698868	Many don't take advantage of my office hours for help.
4698968	Students, in general, don't seem to want to hear that they are deficient and don't really want to work to change.
4699035	These difficulties are magnified when the student tries to learn a foreign language
4699798	Services are not always coordinated
4700993	Students with these types of difficulties need one-to-one assistance over the course of their academic careers which I do not have time to provide.
4701607	These students may not be able to secure employment in the field. Do you want a medical person who needs extra time or help figuring things out in an emergency situation?

4701623	They have a difficult time comprehending the material. Sometimes no matter what I have done, they don't understand.
4702325	should have remedial opportunity before tackling mainstream classes
4702783	Have to take extra time to assist these individuals in identifying ways to better skills.
4704135	It takes a lot of time to properly help someone. And, again, many academically vulnerable students are not very motivated or are simply easily overwhelmed. Some don't even understand basic course requirements.
4707474	Lack of effort on the student's part
4709159	I taught remedial writing classes at a community college for a year before coming to a state-related university. Some of my students, whom you refer to "academically vulnerable" would benefit significantly from that type of instruction. Fortunately or unfortunately, some students simply are not academically or intellectually equipped for university-level work and it is naive to construct a responsibility for the university to confer success upon those who do not merit success because of their own abilities.
4710482	I cannot understand the meaning, or idea they are trying to convey. They don't read the textbook.
4711065	Students in college should be able to write a paper without grammatical errors.
4711782	Time
4712141	Their lack of desire to seek help or take advice
4712462	They are sometimes unable to respect the office hours and come at inconvenient times
4745034	I am not a reading specialist despite my background in special education. The amount of time and effort required of the student in terms of input into reading assignments seems to be much greater than many students are willing and/or able to commit. I will spend an hour with just one student going over a step by step process to show them how to extract relevant information from a reading assignment only to learn later that the student 'could not' follow through because it took 'too much time' to do so. Our students, from all backgrounds, have a long list of priorities that stand ahead of sitting down and practicing reading. Without the full commitment of the student, any efforts on the part of the faculty and the resource center is moot. This is very very frustrating.
4767499	My frustration comes when these students do not utilize the resources available to them.
4776976	I don't teach reading and writing.
4777169	Unless they are identified as a student with an existing disability it can be hard to tell them from other students who don't read or write well.
4777243	Their lack of preparation. Their inability to see or acknowledge their difficulties. The institutionalized sense of co-dependence that leads to feelings of entitlement.
4783265	Lack of time. With over 150 students in three different preparations, one

	becomes exhausted.
4783347	Tremendous time consumption.
4785434	takes time from my teaching duties and prep for classes. I am not prepared to remediate students currently because of my tight schedule and other duties. We provide free tutoring to ALL students for ALL classes so I normally would not be required to do this.
4785442	There is not time in the discipline-specific class to adequately address these issues. The students should be required to participate in reading/writing programs if their problems are identified.
4795308	Communication
4795452	Lack of training in how to address these students' needs. It seems, however, that very extensive training would be necessary (equivalent to, say, an education degree) to really meet the needs of the students.
4795571	Inability to overcome their deficiencies
4796662	Due to the nature of my courses, I cannot always tell if a student has reading difficulties. However, writing issues come up regularly in assignments that are turned in. Our school has a Writing Lab as part of the Academic Success Center for students who need extra help. I often refer students there for additional help, as I am not trained in helping students with writing difficulties.
4798130	They're lazy, and I hate lazy people.
4798145	Written work becomes a nightmare. Exams are hard to grade. Students who are academically vulnerable due to weak reading and writing skills will not be able to keep up. One of the assumptions that I make is that my students can read and write at a college level. Those who can't are in trouble. To aim at the weak students means that I alienate the strong students. It's hard to reach a balance.
4799098	n/a
4799304	Inadequate knowledge of appropriate pedagogies by adjunct and other faculty. Disastrously bad instruction at grade school and high school level. Inadequate support for learning at home
4800043	Most of them lack many prerequisite skills and lack motivation to persist.
4800152	Many of them have just either a) insufficient average intelligence OR b) their intelligence is not suited to academic pursuits (i.e they may be very good with their hands or with visual thinking - artists, craftspeople, graphic designers, mechanics, etc.), but Shakespeare and Jefferson don't mean a thing to them. In both cases, college is simply not the place for them to be.
4800561	Many of the students who need assistance in the areas of reading and writing resist help because these areas pose so many difficulties for them that students have acquired either a feeling of futility or shame and thus find avoidance to be less painful.
4801653	Students don't ask for help soon enough.
4802799	The "static" such difficulties cause in achieving the ability to accurately and sufficiently describe phenomena; the difficulties both grammatical and vocabulary problems cause in strengthening abilities to conceptualize

	and generalize. Of course, ungrammatical and barbaric prose is offensive and tiresome.
4808320	It some cases it is just attitude. They do not want to admit that they really need more assistance in completing papers and projects.
4812028	No consistency in other courses. What I keep reinforcing and expecting in my courses are not reinforced in other courses.
4816893	Many were coddled or ignored--both are bad--in high school. They often blame the professor. Again, worse with minority students...
4817025	A good portion of the faculty seem to pretend that the problem does not exist. Most seem unwilling to say anything "negative"
4817104	None
4817540	They can't keep up with the other students and I fear they will not succeed in their chosen profession.
4817854	They don't use the resources available to them. They want to hide their challenges from their classmates.
4817968	Apathy and time constraints and the fact that I seem to be the only faculty member in my department who still makes students write and complete writing assignments and papers (probably related to #26 above)
4818257	None
4818353	Reading and writing should be mastered before taking college level courses.
4821408	see question 26.
4821630	frequent absences; lack of work ethic; their justifications for not doing well
4828273	This, to me, seems to be an expectation or requirement that students should have mastered prior to coming to college. Language barriers or international language/dialect differences are different than simply not being able to read and write. This, I do not feel, should be addressed in the traditional classrooms with faculty, but rather, at academic support level.
4828474	At the junior level, the students should be able to read and write
4828536	reading and writing may be problems, but not listening and/or not coming to class is a bigger problem
4828770	Additional time required for exams. Many times I need to give exam for 1 hour then lecture the second half of class due to content volume but when I have a student that is granted additional time I cannot lecture and the whole class falls behind. The office is not open during the time I have class to proctor the student separately. Even if they did the student would miss the lecture, putting them at a disadvantage.
4828817	Failure of prior educational systems to adequately prepare students
4828827	In teachers education, many of these students will not be able to pass the Praxis 1. Therefore, they will not be able to teach. I try to walk that fine line (in my lower level classes) of trying to help them improve their skills while also letting them see the reality of the praxis1.
4828873	I am only frustrated by students who are not motivated to improve
4828897	reading is the key to effective learning. a person who has reading

	difficulties has to be missing a piece of the puzzle because no amount of pedagogy will compensate “not getting it” in print
4828948	they should know it already
4828960	My lack of training
4828987	I wonder if it is a waste of my time of which i have so little. Will they drop out? Is it fair to the other students?
4829011	Setting standards that are aimed for the whole class and then having them fall short.
4829094	I feel that many students are taught/believe that the only way to get a job/be successful is to attend college- I feel that much of this is due to advertising and recruiting efforts by colleges and universities that are, in essence, profit- seeking institutions. I truly feel that many students would be better served be being encouraged to attend trade schools and community colleges. There is absolutely nothing wrong with learning a trade and it is a fact that many students are not talented at academics- not necessarily a bad thing, but maybe more effort should be spent helping them find something that better suits their natural skills and abilities. I spent three yrs on the “committee for academic standards” in which we give failing students another chance and it is painfully obvious that many students would be more successful in a venue outside an academic institution and I wonder why we why we discourage that?
4829153	Frequently these students do not invest time in study, do not attend class regularly and do not come for assistance.
4829226	Students do not take the time to develop the skills that they need to improve
4829293	Often these students are poorly motivated many do not attend class regularly, do not seek out extra help, and do not invest the time effort needed.
4829344	Students should self identify to each instructor. When a student does not make grading exams difficult. particularly if the student has a disability and I am aware of that
4829380	Find a way to balance a focus on content with a focus on skills. Developing material and assignments that can help struggling students to improve without failing to challenge better prepared students. If a student wants to do better however nothing is more rewarding than helping such a student meet this goal.
4829458	I'm very concerned with their ability to be effective in the classroom.
4829559	They hold the classes back we have to slow down. Many do not recognize their difficulties and feel their presence is the equivalent of achievement.
4829710	as a teacher educator it is shocking to see hoe poorly k-12 schools prepare students for academic work. reading and writing skills are very weak.
4829736	that no matter how much i try they don't seem to improve. That they have been sp poorly served by public schools. That their earlier teachers were too lazy or ignorant to insist on high standards.

4829846	Explaining assignments over and over, students rarely use office hours, plagiarized assignments, pacing of content
4829873	spending so much time working an and teaching grammar
4829888	much of my content is delivered by test based resources
4829927	they disrupt the continuity of the class and it is agonizing to read some of their work. I held as much as I can.
4829982	More do not identify themselves that do
4830029	I am often frustrated by the lack of university support and/or the students lack of initiative
4838523	Because many students fail to read effectively, they neglect to follow written assignment instructions or answer essay questions accurately. Thus while they may be successful in other areas (presentation, effort, product) or know the material, they can't express it in writing. Because they aren't up-to-speed overall they'd make a poor job candidate or intern. Also, I can't spend the time necessary to coach design students in writing skills, even though I'm trained in that area. I've found that they are so stuck in their previous mode of bad writing that it would take major intervention to correct them.
4839662	The students themselves sometimes do not take full advantage of the services available, and some, though not most, seem to use their disability as an excuse for putting in insufficient effort and doing poor work.
4849088	There should be a better approach to screening students and to supporting them within a course vs in detached remedial centers.
4849336	Conflicts between setting high standards and yet making adaptations to allow for challenges
4856088	Trying to identify appropriate teaching methods and styles that will provide them with the necessary information that they require while providing a challenging academic environment to the remainder of the class.
4868532	same as above
4868542	The extra time to teach reading & writing
4868552	I want to help but feel they need alot of 1:1 assistance
4868586	None
4868591	1. that for some reason, they did not acquire these skills in elementary school or high school. This maybe the fault of poor teachers! 2. That, if the students suffer from a disability, they did not get adequate help or support earlier in life 3. That somehow, they were passed up the line to me in a 300 or 400 level class
4868599	Problems should have been addressed earlier in academic career Academic support services pays lip service to the problem
4868611	The basic skills should have been mastered long ago!
4869147	Very time intensive to assist them in getting to the level of understanding needed for academic rigor

Respondent ID	Q28 Open Text - To what extent have you been prepared to serve the students you teach who are academically vulnerable? Please explain your answer.
4632767	I have not been prepared, and I don't think I could be. Remedial education and college-level learning cannot be coterminous in the same class space.
4632774	Fairly well prepared.
4632778	Minimally. I've attended on campus workshops and have asked for input from the Office of Students with Disabilities
4632788	My training has focused on students who can and want to read, write and think critically. That does not always include "academically vulnerable" students.
4632803	Well prepared. Undergraduate and graduate course work in teaching students of all types. My background includes working in a learning center, working with students with special needs and working at a community college.
4632805	I have a degree in reading with reading specialist and supervision. I worked in the summer Act 101 program for 9 years. I had trouble in my first two years of my undergraduate education. I teach study strategies and content area reading courses.
4632865	Very little. I have taken some education courses that have helped me to understand some of the issues, but I don't feel that I have received training/knowledge through my role as an instructor
4632961	None.
4633018	My professional training deals with helping academically vulnerable students.
4633039	I have a degree in composition and rhetoric. I have worked with the academically disadvantaged.
4633072	I have an educational background, thus feel rather well prepared.
4633084	My background is in special education and I taught 37 years in the public schools
4633191	Very little beyond what I have sought out myself. If I have a student who falls into this category, I often have to call either Academic Support Services or the Office for Students with Disabilities for their help/
4633414	seminars, other faculty mentors
4633649	I have not taken any formal classes, I have just learned from experience and by asking questions
4633653	Not at all.
4633675	my personal development only
4634141	Very, I am trained in special education
4634491	Have done work with learning styles and learning psychology
4634784	I am willing to help ALL my students out of class regardless of whether they are academically vulnerable or not.
4634947	Our school has an Early Identification system
4635228	I am prepared to teach a wide range of students, and often feel that I work

	effectively with students who are less prepared than we might wish. But it's hard to be prepared to work with ones who are academically vulnerable because they don't get additional help for learning problems or because they have unrealistic attitudes about education due to lack of previous exposure, and expect the instructor to carry the burden or be easier on them.
4635263	little to no training in this area
4635305	Absolutely no preparation
4635776	i teach the best of what I have to teach with and for.
4635806	If your question means "prepared" by my employer, then the answer is almost not at all. If you mean prepared in a general sense, then my years of church work, the experience of my family's devotion to volunteerism, and a social ethic have been significant.
4635840	I have been "trained" as much as I can be. We have a good supply of support services not only for students, but also workshops for faculty, and the institution cannot entirely reorient itself to academically vulnerable students.
4638203	workshops and meetings with other instructors/faculty
4638308	Through workshops on campus and reading educational resources.
4639584	Some try to game the system by using their vulnerabilities.
4646610	I offer students the opportunity to visit with me during office hours to review class material. I always give students the opportunity to review any information they are uncomfortable with before each exam and I always review each exam the very next class session.
4650260	None. I don't have any idea who they might be, with the exception of our Office for Students with Disabilities which takes an active role in helping those students registered with them.
4650523	our academic success center helps
4654148	I have had to learn on the job.
4663397	We have a plan in place for academically vulnerable students. I also work collaboratively with the university academic support services.
4663443	I feel as a faculty member that I need more preparation such as workshops or conferences because I do not feel as prepared as I probably should working with academically vulnerable students.
4666162	I have taken lots of learning workshops and have been doing this for a very long time. After a while its no big deal.
4673163	None.
4673993	university provided instruction; seminar instruction
4676805	Very well. . . by my background and experience in public schools.
4677723	I am prepared in the sense that I am a compassionate, sensitive, intuitive teacher.
4682574	None. If we want to get help, it is all on our own.
4697763	I have not reached out for any additional preparation because of my own background in special education and my knowledge of what should be done. I do conference with other faculty members about certain students within our rather small and close knit department.

4697766	A great deal, but not by my institution. My profession, by nature, requires that I work with people with disabilities. This is what I am teaching my students to be able to do.
4698057	At the university setting, we have not been prepared.
4698100	I have NOT been trained. College students should have IQs above 85, and I have had some who have not. People with SATS of 390 do not belong in regular college classes, and I find that community colleges give them As and tell them they are wonderful. Our college writing courses give them As and do the same thing.
4698109	Through workshops and experience.
4698162	I am prepared to give students all the assistance they ask for. However, they need to ask for it. Recently such a student sent me a pitiful note about how he was failing my class and that he would do everything necessary to pass. I invited him to office hours to do something about it. He then skipped the next three classes, and I have not yet seen him at office hours.
4698173	During my doctoral program I was asked by the chair of the Nutrition Department to tutor academically challenged athletes in his course. It taught me a lot to work one-on-one with these students. I learned a lot about what to do and not do in the classroom by the questions that they had for me. For example, the professor during his lecture said that the theory took a 180 degree turn around and one of my athletes thought that the 180 was a very important fact that she needed to memorize but didn't know what it meant. I learned that speaking clearly and avoiding those types of figures of speech helps immensely. I also have had a lot of experience with ESL and that also makes me realize the importance of clarity and simplicity when offering knowledge.
4698222	Not at all -- our discipline has prepared us to engage with students who are literate and who have some motivation to seek specialized skills and an advanced knowledge set. The only people prepared to deal with this problem are those trained in special education.
4698251	learned that skill as 'on the job' training, as needed for specific students. no formal training.
4698266	By attending workshops and deliberately focusing my energy and considerable time on learning strategies appropriate to some of the vulnerabilities.
4698399	None...not even sure what academically vulnerable means
4698486	I teach in Special Education. This is what I do.
4698550	I have a graduate degree in Curriculum and Instruction with an emphasis in Reading Instruction as well as Gifted Education certification which includes preparation for teaching learning disabled gifted.
4698868	I have an ESL teaching certificate, so I feel rather prepared.
4698968	Other than a workshop or two over the years and a "mainstreaming" course as an undergrad, most of my knowledge on this topic is self-learned.
4699035	I care, I have taken a few workshops, I ask around.

4699798	I have experience and training as a reading specialist and taught at-risk college students in basic reading and writing skills courses.
4699858	I was 'academically vulnerable' myself. For a lot of reasons I had to teach myself how to write well. But I never had a class or any academic preparation. I suppose having cerebral palsy slowed me down physically but it made me more patient with people.
4700993	As a former high school teacher, I was trained to write IEPs for both gifted and learning disabled students. However, I have not received any formal training in this area.
4701607	I try to teach study skills. Being a parent allows me to transfer skills I have learned through parental experience.
4701623	I have never had formal training.
4702325	can only refer them to many excellent areas of assistance here
4702783	experience - working with several students who have needed assistance
4704135	Many years ago, as a graduate student I received training as a writing center tutor. And, I have about eight years of experience teaching different composition classes.
4707474	I do not have a degree in education. I do not have special training
4709159	I offer any reasonable accommodation, including assistance outside of class, to students who are interested in receiving extra help. However, my offer stands for ALL students, not just those who fall into the AV category.
4710482	Not at all. I have dealt with students ranging from learning disabilities, to mental problems to physical disabilities and feel my only real resource for learning how to help them is through advice from other faculty. I feel the university wants me to do special things and give special consideration to these students but does little/nothing to prepare me for their real disability except a form letter I get at the beginning of the semester.
4711065	Not much. I try to accommodate students however I can, but they need to take the initiative to ask for help.
4711782	strong preparation
4712141	Training opportunities are few and far between at this university. I try to be open minded but I know I need more training
4712462	No formal preparation recently but 16 years as a teacher / 24 years as a social worker
4745034	I personally have several teaching certificates at every level of teaching (elementary, secondary, and special education) in addition to 30 years of experience with students of every ability level (from the developmentally challenged, learning disabled, mainstream achievers to the gifted).
4767499	As a licensed clinical psychologist, I feel my training and experience allows me to better understand the needs/concerns of such students, understanding ADA, etc. However, I have not had any formalized preparation/training as to how to best serve these students.
4776976	Acquired the experience over the years in my teaching assignments.
4777169	Office of disability services provides workshops, assistance fro students,

	faculty--who work with them about how best to manage these learning disabilities.
4777243	Little other than experience working with them.
4783265	I have some background--a BS in Secondary Ed and graduate courses in education methods.
4783347	It is not that I need any special preparation for College-level work. Students who are ill-prepared for college should complete a remedial program BEFORE matriculating to a 4-year institution of HIGHER EDUCATION.
4785434	Master's in Education with strong emphasis on teaching students with exceptionalities
4785442	Very little, if at all. There is no formal pedagogical or other training provided to faculty regarding best practices in addressing the needs of these students.
4795308	none
4795452	Only by prior experience and a few short workshops. This has generally meant inadequately.
4795571	I have an open-door for anyone seeking assistance; I modify lectures and labs to be inclusive for these students
4796662	I have attended brown bag lunch seminars on different topics relating to dealing with underprepared students. I have also spoken with counselors in our Academic Success Center who have helped me through some issues with my underprepared students and advisees.
4798130	I have been taught to teach average students, but I feel like I'm teaching third graders at times.
4798145	I've learned much from our academic support services folks. I've learned from experience (I've seen my fair share of shaky students. On the road to my Ph.D., I took only one course in teaching and that was it. The rest was learned by teaching with undergrads as my guinea pigs. Mind you, I went to an elite university for my Ph.D. and the undergrads were not at all academically challenged (those that did transferred to loser schools like Cornell).
4799098	I know where to direct them for special assistance.
4799304	Have a Masters in the Teaching of Writing as well as a Ph.D. Have undertaken research on writing disabilities, and written on the subject.
4800043	I need more specific information, particularly on how to motivate these students.
4800152	I attend training sessions with our newly established center of Learning and Advising.
4800561	In addition to teaching, I also direct a learning center. I have attended many conferences and workshops related to developmental education. From a faculty perspective, many faculty do not have such opportunities and many are not interested.
4801653	I was a journalist before I began teaching and I didn't have any preparation for academically vulnerable students. My colleagues have been very helpful, however.

4802799	In the first 15 years at this college, substantial institutionally supported effort went into such preparation -- including diagnosis as well as pedagogy: mainly in the form of half a dozen workshops conducted by consultants, by previously trained and prepped peers in the institution. In the past 15 years practically no effort has been expended in this area, evidently in the hope that an office of student assistance could pick up the slack. I have personally compensated for this by attending two APSA Teaching and Learning conferences, which have been helpful. Finally, I taught vulnerable students early in my career and “learned on the fly” at U of Maryland, Europe, a federal penitentiary, a two year institution serving marginal students, and my own college which has in my years here admitted high proportions of very vulnerable students.
4808320	I am willing to come in early or stay later in the day. I have met with students, in the past, on a Saturday and even a Sunday afternoon.
4812028	I taught high school and have secondary certification. I've also supervised student-teachers. I read English journals extensively.
4816893	I've always taught at schools with virtual open-admissions policies and, hence, a relatively high percentage of academically vulnerable students. I've had to learn on the fly...
4817025	I don't believe that the solution takes a great deal of “preparation.” What is lacking is a large degree of honesty. This is particularly true in the Ed Schools.
4817104	Coming from a public high school was perhaps my best training.
4817540	I have not been prepared at all. Again, I do not believe it is my responsibility to remediate students. It is the student's responsibility as a college student to figure out how to help him/herself. I am willing and eager to provide advise; nothing more.
4817854	I was not prepared at all when I first started teaching in higher ed. I have had to learn via campus resources and mentoring.
4817968	I guess nothing besides a Ph.D. and past experience as a student.
4818257	My own personal experience.
4818353	I can help them effectively in our developmental courses, and they should start there. I would have difficulty if they were taking our college courses.
4821408	I am not a counselor or teacher of writing/reading. My job is to teach college level courses.
4821630	Better than most but college is not the place to teach basic reading and writing. Those skills must be in place prior to enrolling in college courses. How can you expect to succeed if you cannot read??????
4828273	I have actually had very little experience with this as I have only taught for 4 years; only two students have actually come to me and identified themselves as having specific learning needs or difficulties. Therefore, I don't feel well prepared to answer whether I would or would into recognize these needs just yet.
4828474	Very little beyond basic education
4828536	I have picked up what I have on my own. As a former public school

	teacher for 13 years, I learned tips to help struggling elementary students. This self-initiated training has served me in assisting my college students.
4828770	I have been made aware that we have a program but that is about it.
4828817	Trainings by OSD and academic advising have been useful
4828827	My background as a sped. teacher in public schools serves me well when working with these vulnerable students.
4828873	not very well. No real training or instruction.
4828897	I've taught a long time and have some experience with what does and doesn't work. I've done a fair amount of training related to advising and classroom learning.
4828948	None
4828960	On the job learning and my own reading
4828987	Not much really in the way of formal training. It's just mostly my experience.
4829011	Director to student support services
4829153	None in my formal education: I studied music and how to perform music there were no classes on teaching students with academic difficulties.
4829226	I have had little specialized preparation to teach these students
4829293	there is no pedagogical training for PhD candidates to work with any students. I did briefly teach freshman comp at another institution and became more familiar with some issues and strategies
4829380	Most of my preparation comes from experience.
4829458	I attend workshops conferences and read
4829559	Over time I have learned ways of supporting academically vulnerable students
4829710	not at all. only from experience.
4829736	I've been to some workshops and discussed strategies with other faculty. Generally the it is that students like these should not be admitted to college until they have acquired the skill
4829846	University seminars sponsored by ods, training prior to coming to university
4829873	I have a degree in special ed
4829888	I thought in the public schools where it was expected that teachers me appropriate learning accommodations for all students, I have had several courses and have attended many seminars and workshops on universal design for learning.
4829927	I teach are and software. I am very prepared to teach art and the creative process. Software reading and writing go hand in hand. Without the foundations in reading it is difficult to learn software.
4829982	A background in education helps!
4830029	as a graduate student the university of Kentucky I received training in identifying academically vulnerable students based on the quality of their work and was informed of the disabilities act and the type of support services needed to support them. Also my brother has a learning disability
4838523	During my undergrad and grad school years I tutored students in writing

	and reading. I've studied effective teaching techniques, especially in regards to writing.
4839662	Fairly well, I think the university provides a reasonable amount of information and instruction on and assistance in working with these students.
4849088	I am prepared because developmental studies is part of my own professional background.
4849336	Previous experience in basic education and training as a reading specialist
4856088	On the job training
4868532	-5 years teaching/training in a private college preparatory high school for students w/dyslexia -training & experience w/basic writers (composition studies acknowledgement of students w/low level skills)
4868542	I am certified to work with individuals language problems not an academic prep
4868552	My training as a speech-language pathologist has been he most helpful
4868586	I am very prepared but not through my university. I have the background needed to don't take advantage of trainings through the university
4868591	Well prepared, because I have two year's experience teaching writing at a community college, and three years teaching journalism courses at a commuter campus. I also served as a writing center consultant for one semester
4868599	not at all
4868611	As a Catholic, I have an obligation to see Christ in them. I don't think I have received any formal preparation to deal with such cases.
4869147	I provide one on one assistance along with evening workshops for the difficult sections of the course

Respondent ID	Q29 Open Text - What do you perceive to be the chief instructional need for faculty in working with students who experience reading and writing difficulties?
4632767	Such students need extra outside attention, mandated by the university: tutoring, for example, that takes place outside normal class time but within the framework of the course. This is not something the professor should have to worry about.
4632774	not sure what this question is asking...
4632778	Staff who are better trained and can focus on those problems (outside of my discipline)
4632788	Additional faculty who deal primarily if not exclusively with academically vulnerable . . . and sufficient institutional resources such that the academic experience for good (or is that “academically invulnerable”) students does not suffer.
4632803	Understanding alternate methods of assessment and assignments. Support and assistance from a Learning Center, Academic Support Department, and/or Office for Students with Disabilities.
4632805	Most faculty in content areas are researchers rather than teachers. They lack the understanding of the pedagogy needed to work with this type of student. The faculty were biologists, are social workers or whatever before they became professors. Most would tell you that they want to teach “prepared” students because that would be expected when you have college students to teach.
4632865	tools for helping these students. Is it appropriate to offer different assessment methods for just these students? What different assessment methods should and could be used?
4632961	I do not believe it is the responsibility of a faculty member to be remedial. The student should be prepared for college work.
4633018	To provide additional feedback and assistance.
4633039	All teachers need to see that they are responsible for teaching literacy skills in their particular academic areas. While students receive general instruction in research methodology in their freshman writing classes, they often do not know how to conduct research and writing in highly specific contexts within their academic majors. Academically disadvantaged often need more help in making this transfer, and faculty in these disciplines don't see this need as part of their jobs. They would rather complain about inadequate preparation rather than helping students. Another problem is that students often maintain a double standard. Spelling and grammar “counts” in an English class, but it should not count in other academic areas, and student often get combative when they see that their grades are lowered because academic-based faculty have no right to lower grades for poor spelling or sentence structure. Faculty themselves often cannot compose clear discourse either.
4633072	Writing center, tutors, early self identification.

4633084	Support from administration
4633191	For those teaching in areas outside the language arts, we need to know where to refer the students and how we can follow up on our referrals.
4633414	academic support services that can take over with those fundamentals
4633649	getting information at the beginning of the semester in regard to what students need help and what kind of help do they need.
4633653	We need the students to receive academic support from faculty specifically designated to do so.
4633675	graduate assistant tutors
4634141	Academic support services for students who have been assessed as at risk.
4634491	Tools for identification and steps to take...an algorithm of sorts
4634784	outside help
4634947	Simply put, all the extra time it takes.
4635228	Time.
4635263	these students need to be identified by non-faculty methods. faculty then need to be made aware of the situation. faculty need instruction concerning solutions to student reading and writing difficulties.
4635305	Pressure by Administration to do Nobel-prize winning research at the same time
4635776	Learning to help them help themselves
4635806	Patience and the willingness to use each instance as an opportunity for building the skills previously underprepared.
4635840	Support services in the form of tutoring and remedial support.
4638308	Preparation on how to deal with these students.
4639584	Faculty needs to have prior information and specifics of students' difficulties before school year begins.
4646610	Remedial instruction should be provided by specialists and/or students who are majors in secondary and adult English education.
4650260	Not sure. I'm not sure it's a good idea to try to train faculty to deal with something about which they know very little. Other than that, and help from appropriate offices, I don't know what else to do.
4650523	text books in alternate formats
4654148	To be able to identify the students in the first place and to have the appropriate places to refer them to for help.
4663397	Formal training on how to adequately serve vulnerable students.
4663443	I am unsure was is the chief instructional need.
4666162	Time
4673163	Not sure?
4673993	remediation materials
4676805	The unwillingness of academia to have common expectations.
4677723	Understand the range of difficulties, the best methods to help students, making use of colleagues and resources available on campus
4682574	We need outside assistance, rather than a general "writing center" that specializes in helping students like them.

4697763	More use of the writing center and tutors available for all classes where there is a need.
4697766	ATTITUDINAL issues.... Many faculty members don't understand that disability does NOT equal stupidity!
4698057	People want to how to address the student's needs without handing over a diploma.
4698100	learning to read and write, learning to think abstractly.
4698109	Depends on the student and what their needs are.
4698162	It is not practical for instructors in most departments to deal with reading and writing difficulties. I, for example, am a computer science instructor. It is not my job to teach reading and writing. That doesn't mean that I never give suggestions to improve a student's writing, but significant problems with reading and writing should be handled before a student comes to a four-year college. This should be the purpose of the admissions exam--screen out those who can't read or write at a high-school level. Many community colleges are better prepared to deal with reading and writing problems.
4698173	The main need is to insure that the student comprehends the basic information and knows exactly what is important. They need to know what to focus on when reviewing for exams. I have had great success by having them first organize their notes and then come in to see me to confirm that they are focusing on the correct information.
4698222	I have no idea. Presumably, these students are in this mess because other people have read TO them and written FOR them all through school in the name of "helping" them. So adding more people to the payroll to read and write for them is just passing the problem along to potential stakeholders -- e.g., employers.
4698251	alternate ways for the student to access written information, and perhaps alternate ways for the student to do written assignments.
4698266	The chief instructional need is, ultimately, assuring that students can read and write at a level appropriate to facilitate learning at ca college level before admitting them to college level classes. I do not believe that we can teach the content of our courses/majors at an appropriate level to prepare students for careers, citizenship, etc. when there are so many fundamental needs that also need to be met before students can acquire needed knowledge, skills and the ability to become "lifelong learners" independently of individual focused instruction.
4698399	better prep in HS
4698486	A resource center
4698550	Faculty teaching College Writing classes must have smaller class sizes so that the students could get more individualized instruction. If they give a writing assignment but have too many students in their classes, they cannot thoroughly read every word and respond as they should.
4698868	A learning resource center devoted to their needs.
4698968	strong and relevant remediation BEFORE taking college level courses. It does not serve the needs of these students to continually present them

	with additional opportunities to fail because they lack the necessary skills.
4699035	To determine to what extent you must modify your rubrics to accommodate whatever their particular disability is.
4699798	Understanding the linguistic and experiential basis for literacy competence and how teachers can positively impact a students' success without totally re-doing a course.
4699858	patience and persistence
4700993	One-to-one tutoring available for students in all academic disciplines.
4701607	Time.
4701623	They need support at the university level. They need help understanding the material and completing assignments.
4702325	effective supplemental instruction
4702783	A resource guide for faculty
4704135	It would be helpful if students could be made aware of their strengths and weaknesses at the beginning of their first year in college. Academically vulnerable students could then be instructed early on in what exactly it takes to succeed so that they are psychologically prepared for the challenges. Then there should be a learning center with tutors where these students can come for help and also to prepare their assignments, with trained tutors on standby.
4707474	A tutorial center with qualified staff
4709159	Up-front remedial courses that attempt to address academic deficiencies.
4710482	Dedicated and required time in a writing center or similar. While I understand the students are welcome there, I am not aware of any policy that requires them to engage in activities that improve this situation. That may be my lack of information on the subject.....
4711782	Support
4712141	More time for individual attention
4712462	Students to identify themselves after class
4745034	Training for faculty is essential. If that training is pushy and faculty are told what they 'have to do' then it is unlikely to be as effective as students' need. A center that is run by reading specialists that is available to any and all students who choose to use it would be wonderful. Most students need some help with comprehension of reading assignments. I estimate that less than ten percent of my students in any of my classes are able to read at a college level when they arrive and too many graduate without ever achieving this skill.
4767499	Access to all available resources for these students, knowledgeable professionals with specialized training to help facilitate the students' progress.
4776976	The students have to take ? courses before taking regular classes.
4777169	Proper effective strategies and teaching games that work well for students.
4777243	No Answer.
4783265	Time. Class sizes that permit individualized attention. A move away from

	the “more students, fewer teachers” bottom line mentality of management.
4783347	See response to question 28.
4785434	Time
4785442	The ability to refer the student to a specialist for appropriate assistance. Access to writing-support software at the university-level would also be helpful.
4795308	basic instructions
4795452	To require students to be better prepared before becoming full-fledged college students, either through community college or through a more extensive remedial program at this college.
4795571	Identification of reading and writing level so that accommodations, if possible can be made.
4796662	There needs to be some type of supplementary learning center that can assist students with these types of difficulties.
4798130	Everyone goes to college, and that's the problem. Some of these kids are not college material, and we're expected to bend over backwards to help them.
4798145	The chief instructional need is to learn how to deal with academically challenged students. Those of us who were not trained to deal with such students, really require support staff to take care of these students. We will help as we can, but we have a subject matter to deliver and not just to academically weak students.
4799098	n/a
4799304	Acceptance of the fact that reading and writing difficulties may be brain-related rather than matters of sloth or stupidity.
4800152	Working closely with and being mentored by the English and Communications departments faculty members.
4800561	Faculty need to understand different learning styles and ways to tap into those styles, and faculty need to recognize that helping students to learn how to read and write in general as well as in a discipline is a responsibility of all faculty and that such help does not do a disservice to a discipline but, in fact, enhances it.
4801653	I think it is particularly difficult for English teachers to understand these problems, because, as a rule, we don't have problems reading or writing.
4802799	1. Patience; (2) Readiness to encourage and reinforce rather than constantly criticized; (3) Social sensitivity; and (4) Access to specific tools and classroom procedures.
4808320	Patience and understanding of their special challenges
4812028	How to break down material so it can be mastered by students
4816893	More mandatory/conditional situations, such as lab time in the writing center for students who fail their first essay.
4817025	Fixing this problem is a major undertaking. It needs to be addressed by a separate department which can devote its full energy to solving the problem. Coordination with other departments would be necessary, of course.

4817104	Sometimes you may have make it on a lower grade level so that the students can get a better understanding of the materials.
4817540	Students with difficulties should be required to go to a reading/writing center where they can receive help from specifically trained mentors. It is not the responsibility of a faculty member teaching a specific class.
4817854	Their should be staff/faculty specifically designated to instruct the students with such basic needs.
4817968	workshops/seminars maybe? More time to work with these kinds of students though seems most vital.
4818257	Time
4818353	I would leave it to the Office of Students with Disabilities to help the student, and I would work with them as needed.
4821408	It is not my job to deal with this issue.
4821630	I don't think it is up to the faculty. There should be a program to get these students up to speed and if they can't, then don't waste their money. It is immoral to let them enroll in courses knowing they are unable to do basic work.
4828273	For faculty to be able to disseminate the information to students, and therefore, the need would be based on individual student difficulties.
4828474	Patience
4828536	We need a way to get students to take advantage of the support systems the university has in place. Instead they come to me asking to withdraw from a class(es) which they are failing late in the semester. This crisis could have been avoided if the student would have sought help early in the semester.
4828770	methods that I can alter my teaching strategies to reach those students
4828817	Cultural sensitivity
4828827	More training, maybe some information about U.D.L.
4828873	outside classroom resources for students
4828897	Smaller, More homogenous class would help.
4828948	community college
4828960	I don't understand the question
4828987	Strategies to help the improve skills in these areas.
4829011	Empathy
4829153	Background knowledge and pedogogical strategies
4829226	Time is a big issue. you can tell the students where they are having problems but they need to go to the learning center for specialized help
4829293	Training ad recognizing students who may have poor skill. I know i have had students come to me and say the don't understand the readings on assignments that I don't see as complex or high level. I don't know how to address this except to refer them elsewhere
4829344	I don't know
4829380	It is really helpful to have a writing and study skills center to refer students to for additional help.
4829559	Good support staff, Classes that aid the student in areas where they

	require remedial assistance
4829710	collaboration with writing center tutor program etc
4829736	patience tolerance
4829846	Require a minimum SAT and PSSA score for admission
4829873	information to refer them for assistance
4829888	1 recognizing that the difficulty may not be related to ability 3 taking appropriate action to help the student be successful in my class with modifications or adaptations in line with the students need.
4829927	Knowledgeable students assistants
4829982	Understanding that difficulties do not correct directly to iq
4830029	Faculty need to be better informed and involved in the quality of support services they need to see and be involved in out comes assessment
4838523	All faculty should be familiar with proper composition and grammar and able to alert students to such shortcomings. With consistent responses from the 1st year through the final year--and referrals to the writing center when necessary--students should eventually "get it." But when students are allowed to slide through, uncorrected, we end up with seniors unable to write a coherent cover letter or resume.
4839662	Balancing the needs of these students with those of the other students in the course.
4849088	Support and assistance.
4849336	a guide to acceptable adaptations that don't compromise standards and quality of work
4856088	Helping them feel comfortable to ask questions about materials that they do not understand and motivating them to obtain extra help
4868532	Training in generosity - seeing student error/failure/struggle as a symptom of a learning struggle/problem/confusion vs a result of stupidity/lack of effort/etc.
4868542	Understanding of the admissions policy; realize that this student is here to learn; paying for it!
4868552	strategies that could be applied to large classes for written assignments
4868586	Training - info on legal issues
4868591	*competent and well trained support staff/tutors in university learning centers *better training in spotting and diagnosing reading and writing difficulties
4868599	More time - a four course load, scholarly demands, community service, university governance demands all marginalize both need students and me
4868611	Identification of these students (in a timely fashion) and having an effective strategy to deal with these cases.
4869147	Teaching strategies that are effective

Respondent ID	Q30 Open Text - What characteristics are exhibited by academically vulnerable students?
4632767	Although some are hard workers and display intellectual curiosity, most, in my experience, are uninterested and thus underperform. It's not fair to call them stupid just because they appear that way. That fact is, we have no idea what their aptitude is because the most successful college students are the ones who already have a basic critical thinking skill set. The university setting does not usually work, and is not designed to, for students who lack that set.
4632774	lack of self-esteem, immaturity, poor time planners, take on too much and underestimate how much time outside work takes, afraid to speak up in class, lack of depth in understanding complexity of material...
4632778	Withdrawn in class Fail to submit all assignments Often non communicative
4632788	You have supplied the definition and characteristics, so I will leave it at that.
4632803	Varies - Learned helplessness, reluctance to self-identify, overachievement, underachievement, lack of willingness to seek help, over-reliance on help.....
4632805	Lack of motivation Realization of the need for independent work Undiagnosed reading disabilities A general immaturity
4632865	Often poor attendance, poor test scores, difficulty understanding the material.
4632961	Students are unprepared. They often miss class, arrive late or leave early, do their work at the last minute, do not think at all about their response to an assignment or a project. Most seem to be satisfied if they are just getting by.
4633018	Weak writing and reading skills.
4633039	These students often do not represent themselves well. Many would rather make excuses to get sympathy from the faculty rather than working hard to remediate. I have had students with disabilities try to get out of course requirements based on their disabilities, and they will get upset when they are told that they are to maintain the same standards as all other students. Policy at our school states that if students with disabilities cannot complete the work, they are to take a reduced course load. This often does not go over well with students. Other students sometimes blame their lack of skills on others rather than confronting directly their lack of skills and searching out for help. These students often are ashamed to admit weaknesses when others can help them.
4633072	Time management challenges, organizational challenges, reading comprehension, notetaking ability, success on tests
4633084	Appearance of not trying, failure to ask questions, inability to succeed in class
4633191	Absenteeism, little participation when they are present, poor performance on class assignments and tests.

4633414	many...anxiety, withdrawn....
4633649	slow to take notes, need extra time on tests, or other assignments, or someone to explain the assignments a few times or in a different manner.
4633653	They seem to be nervous about their ability to perform at the level of the other students, so I see chronic misbehavior and rudeness toward other students as well as to me. They are completely unable to prevent themselves from using their cellphones and emailing their friends compulsively.
4633675	Frustration
4634141	there is any one characteristic that fits.
4634491	Failure to progress, exhibiting behaviors of hopelessness, depression
4634784	personal heavy work schedules, non-traditional, priorities of personal versus academic life, poor time management, decreased motivation.
4634947	Poor grades, lack of note taking and overt focus in class, often spotty attendance.
4635228	Some lack confidence, have huge anxieties about academic work, and/or have trouble keeping track of assignments/expectations. These things can make them seem careless, sloppy, or lazy. But I have seen a range of realities and attitudes--sometimes students who don't believe they can ever succeed, other times students who have a sense of entitlement, that they won't be held to the same standards as other students. It would be hard to make generalizations about all of them, though--there is the same range of attitudes as in less vulnerable students.
4635263	absences, poor scores, frustration leading to worsened performance due, in part, to lower expectations and general in class distraction
4635305	Some times they tell me. Other times I notice that they are consistently late or "hide" in the classroom. Yet other times they tell me that they understand when there is no understanding in their eyes
4635776	Poor performances and unpreparedness
4635806	Craftiness, cunning. Low self-worth
4635840	Reticence to participate in discussion, poor writing, lack of curiosity, and truency.
4638203	Boredom, frustration,
4639584	Defensiveness, Evasiveness, Refusal to cooperate, etc...
4646610	Poor attendance, coming to class late, inability to focus in class, distractions from cell phones, sleeping in class, missed assignments, ...
4650260	Apathy, disruptive behavior, general downplaying of the need for education. That's a generality, of course. There are those who are completely the opposite.
4654148	Missing class, not being attentive in class, problems taking notes, not knowing how to study...
4663397	Poor test scores. Poor class attendance. Difficulty with application of theory in clinical practice.
4663443	Academically vulnerable students seem distracted, outspoken at improper times in class, frustrated due to the reading and writing difficulties they experience compared to their fellow classmates.

4666162	shy, hesitant, sit in back of room, don't participate in discussions
4673163	Writing difficulty. Poor use of grammar. Difficulty communicating verbally.
4673993	inability to stay focused; difficulty grasping the content
4676805	No commonality. .. each one is an individual and should be treated as such.
4677723	Very often shy, hostile, ostracized by the clinical group
4682574	I haven't had just one type of student like that.
4697763	Frustration, resignation, denial.
4697766	Varies
4698057	I think this student would feel overwhelmed, frustrated and willing to give up.
4698100	Often it is fuzzy thinking - I can deal with someone whose writing skills need work, but if they can't think, I can't fix it.
4698109	Depends on what the student's needs are.
4698162	I've already mentioned some of them: o lack of understanding of the commitment required of those seeking a college education. admitted to college because of a disadvantaged background without evidence of ability and commitment to do college work. Virtually all of my students who do not succeed fail because of lack of commitment (skipped assignments, skipped classes, failure to seek help at office hours or tutoring center, etc.) than for lack of preparation or intelligence.
4698173	In my opinion, there are many different types of vulnerable students and this is hard to sum up. However, many of my vulnerable students have trouble knowing what is important, where they should focus their attention. They often get bogged down in unimportant details. I also have extremely intelligent students who just cannot seem to get organized. I might even label some of these students as gifted, yet unable to appropriately attend to the information at hand. I have had students in my class who have a lot of difficulty reading, but are fantastic listeners. If I cover all of the information for the exam, I have seen some of these students get high 90s on tests that they had difficulty reading the book for preparation and simply listened carefully in class.
4698222	Characteristics vary by student. Some are belligerent and demanding (special tests, access to my notes, waive any written assignments, no essay questions, etc.) whereas other students are almost invisible (rarely come to class, never ask for help, never come to office hours, etc.).
4698251	they often fall through the cracks because they don't ask for the help that they need and that is available.
4698266	Ten years ago, I would have answered that they are frustrated and embarrassed by their difficulties and cannot keep pace with their classes. Now, however, they have become the modal group of many classes coupled with an expectation on their part that everything will be slowed and adapted to their individual needs. Essentially they expect that instruction will be to the lowest common denominator rather than to the reasonable expectations of the field for adequate preparation. Many of

	them do not perceive these things as vulnerabilities or problems.
4698399	not sure
4698486	Reading comprehension, Test taking strategy,
4698550	Poorly written papers, work not turned in, “texting” during class time, sleeping during class time, missing class sessions when work is due, poor grammar in speech
4698868	Low test scores, unorganized and problematic papers, missed classes.
4698968	I'm not terribly up on the literature in this area, but a poor attitude towards education in general and relatively low-self esteem and low personal expectations would fit my experience with weak students.
4699035	They can range from attitude (covering up a vulnerability) to a strong desire to overcome or otherwise surmount their vulnerability. Each student is different and each vulnerability is different.
4699798	1. Don't always understand the unspoken rules of academic success and dealing with adults (especially professors). 2. If the students are not successful using the limited strategies they have, they are prone to give up rather than try to develop new strategies. 3. Attribute success to outside factors rather than effort. 4. Home language does not translate to academic language as closely for them as for other students. 5. Home circumstances may mean less time for studies and more time with family or job obligations.
4699858	They seem to have trouble translating their experience into words. It may be a lack of vocabulary or a lack of understanding of sentence structure. Often, when that student has interest in drawing, you can see how rich their experience actually is, but they are shy about writing or speaking about that experience.
4700993	Generally, these students are highly motivated and have a serious approach to their studies. They do not want to be seen as “different” from other students and in many cases do not ask for accommodations to help them become even more successful. Depending on the disability, some students tend to miss class but most are eager to make up any missing work. In most cases, these students come to class prepared but only communicate when called upon.
4701607	I am not sure what “characteristics” means. These students are needy. They need to have templates for writing and creating projects.
4701623	Some are very hard working and make up for their limitations by trying harder and working more. Others are less motivated and use a diagnosis as an excuse for not doing well.
4702325	poor motivation because they are overwhelmed and feel defeated before they get started
4702783	easily agitated, some attention deficit to various activities
4704135	low confidence, lack of patience, short attention span, cluelessness about how standard language works in contrast to colloquial language and/or dialects, awkward or even inappropriate social manners for generic (perhaps mainstream) settings, no or very little reading experience, confusion about the purpose of universities

4707474	Shy, tend to sway from classes
4709159	Students are often frustrated, with good reason, with lackluster academic performance. But as with all populations, some are motivated to address this performance, and some are not.
4710482	I can't make a blanket statement here. This would range from dedication and frustration to laziness and disconnection.
4711065	Again, you need to better define what you asking, but according to my definition of "academically vulnerable" I would say that they are unprepared for the rigors of college level work, have comprehension problems, and serious writing skills deficiencies.
4711782	lack of confidence
4712141	lack of motivation to learn lack of motivation to remediate weak areas lack of motivation to seek help when struggling general apathy toward the material
4712462	poor test scores, coming to the office to ask more questions
4745034	Shyness, lower self-esteem and a lack of confidence in their abilities, blustery defensiveness, hardworking perseverance, manipulative, insightful about social issues, caring, academically dishonest or lazy, obsessed with getting the points, whining about the difficulty of an assignment, tackling schoolwork head on and proud of achievements---- These and many other characteristics appear in one or another student. Actually, they are not that different than all students at some point in an academic career. They just need the resources that will make a difference in their overall success.
4767499	lack of self-confidence in student role exhibited frustration and/or withdrawal in class absenteeism behavioral disturbances in class anxiety/perfectionism mood disturbance lack of focus in class/on assignments/exams
4777169	anxiety, fear, underperformance
4777243	-See # 2 -Lack of preparation -Lack of knowledge of their inadequate preparation -Entitlement -A belief that college is grade 13 of high school -Unrealistic Expectations
4783265	Lack self-confidence, unaware of available help, feeling "other-ized" in the classroom
4783347	1) A strong sense of entitlement, which permits vulnerable students to enter academic programs for which they are woefully unprepared. 2) Personal/Professional aspirations far exceed their current abilities but are unwilling to put forth the effort to attain their goals.
4785434	poor class attendance, poor writing abilities
4785442	Since students may be academically vulnerable for multiple reasons there are not common signs. Poor class performance may be due to academic or personal reasons and addressing the source of the problem will differ by case.
4795308	lack of participation
4795452	A wide array. They are, on average but certainly not uniformly, less interested in the material than better prepared students.

4795571	hesitancy, quiet demeanor, attitude toward learning process
4796662	I have found that academically vulnerable students show a severe lack of determination to "follow through" with things, which is evidenced by poor attendance or failing to turn in assignments, even assignments that I saw them partially complete during class time. I think they are also highly lacking in confidence. It is often the case that these students fall behind at some point in the semester. I typically try to get in touch with them to offer help (either from myself or another dept on campus). Of those that accept help, a few carry through with the hard work of catching up and are able to succeed based on that help and encouragement. Others accept help initially, but again fail to follow through.
4798130	Lazy. Loud. Jocks. Large egos. Dumb as bricks. Disrespectful to women.
4798145	These students have difficulty reading (one can catch this be having students read their responses on a test out loud). They have difficulty writing (I rarely enjoy my role as grammar mechanic). Exam grads are low. And then these students drop out, sometimes after lingering on via academic probation.
4799098	Easily frustrated.
4799304	Varies widely. Limited vocabulary; limited ability to draw conclusions; difficulties with analysis; lowest levels of Piaget and Perry scales.
4800043	Many believe they cannot succeed and are easily frustrated.
4800152	Depression, absences, being quiet
4800561	This is a difficult question. A few academically vulnerable students recognize their vulnerability and take advantage of academic support services and faculty office hours to compensate for and to address that vulnerability. Other academically vulnerable students, for a variety of reasons such as shame and avoidance of such difficult challenges, do not engage themselves in support services or in their educations. Many of these students, thus, increase their likelihood of failure.
4801653	excessive absences, late assignments, not following directions, not replying to my e-mails when I offer to help them.
4802799	1. Passive hostility, resistance to attention, isolation from better students and faculty and staff. 2. Very weak preparation in previous schooling, very limited retention of either skill sets or of elementary general knowledge that certainly were conveyed in most school settings.
4808320	This could vary from student to student. I have worked with students who were shy and quiet or very outgoing in class. I think the "outgoing" behavior was a way to draw attention away from their weak areas.
4812028	Very weak sentence structure and vocabulary, poor writing skills and comprehension, frequent absences and tardiness
4816893	Poor attendance; late with "minor" assignments; do not follow simple directions, like essay formatting, etc.
4817025	Illiteracy.
4817104	nothing out of the ordinary
4817540	In my experience, they miss class, miss assignments, don't participate as

	much as others (even when encouraged), do not read or understand the syllabus (which I always explain verbally as well as in writing) . . .
4817854	Quiet. Poor handwriting.
4817968	absences, apathy, and occasional inappropriate behavior in the classroom including a lack of respect for other students and faculty members
4818257	fear of being exposed, not participating in class discussions
4821408	They don't read.
4821630	Similar to other students
4828273	Varied and individual; clearly there does not seem to be a 'cookie cutter' mold of what this will look like every time.
4828536	a feeling of being overwhelmed...therefore they do NOTHING...Since they feel like "victims" they play the role of victims..."There is nothing I can do about it." ...instead of going to the office that WOULD provide the help they need. They need to feel empowered so they will seek and receive the help they need.
4828770	Shy, embarrassment. Many times they are afraid to ask for help for fear they will be identified as different.
4828817	Either anxiety regarding perceptions of faculty or overly aggressive behavior
4828827	Lack of determination, lack of self advocacy, a high expectancy of failure, external locus of control
4828873	poor quality of work, lack of self-confidence
4828897	By the time they get to the university, most have experienced frustration along the way and have built in response to difficulties (ex. cutting class, don't buy a book because they won't understand it, don't turn in assignments because they don't understand them) No one can help someone who doesn't show up for life.
4828948	don't come to class
4828960	Withdrawal
4828987	Eagerness, persistence
4829011	low confidence, lack of academic direction, poor attendance.
4829094	Frustration
4829153	Poor class attendance, reluctant to take time outside of class to get help. reluctant to participate in class discussion, often does not complete written assignments
4829226	The lack of studying skills, discipline and writing ability
4829293	low level of engagement. organizational difficulties
4829344	The same characteristics seen in college students in general are hardworking others are not
4829380	Defeatist attitude about class and or their abilities leading to poor attendance. Neediness, trouble focusing on a specific task, poor performance on writing and reading assignments, emotional problems, difficulty understanding professional boundaries
4829458	They tend to be very nervous and anxious in upper level classes
4829559	I have no idea what u r asking here

4829710	Lack of ability to relax and comprehend poor writing and study skills
4829736	They cannot be characterized in this general way. Often however they come from families that do not value or encourage learning and that see education only as a ticket job.
4829846	lack of critical thinking skills, lack of initiative, unwillingness to get tutor
4829888	Sit in the back or right up front, do not participate in discussions, do not ask questions, ask a lot of questions, don't bring text books to class, work is routinely late, students are very creative or think outside the box, prefer projects over research papers.
4829927	some very shy, some very loud, it all depends on their personality
4829982	poor attendance and participation
4830029	Dyslexic, unable to understand assignments, in need of constant explanations of assignments, benefit from model and in class instructions, Fear of failure which leads to poor participation
4838523	In my experience, vulnerable students share these characteristics: they are less observant, less ambitious, less curious and more insecure. But more than anything, they are not, and have never been, avid readers.
4839662	Often they seem to lack confidence in their abilities, perhaps because of past difficulties, and some seem to use their difficulties to excuse things like ordinary procrastination. Otherwise, they are as similar and as diverse as all of the other students.
4849088	Lack of background knowledge in content, metacognitive skills, self efficacy.
4849336	I cannot generalize
4856088	Apathy
4868532	struggle to comprehend assignments to maintain learning pace w/rest of class to produce assignments that seem incoherent (you have to look more closely at what they're actually doing) not attuned to academic environment easily frustrated & defeated
4868542	Maybe additional support for basis skills
4868552	varied: some have poor writing, poor verbal skills, short attention, disruptive in class
4868586	organizational difficulties study problems time issues
4868591	Performance - poor writing, poor test scores, lack of textbook knowledge in class discussions, frequent absences (these could be work-related) Behavior - lack of confidence, low self-esteem, defensiveness
4868599	poor academic performance
4868611	Poor performance in grades, exams, assignments, etc.? I might expect some degree of behavioral problems in the classroom stemming from the corresponding frustrations? I really don't have much info in this regard. I would appreciate an executive summary of your results as a token of appreciation for these answers. Best wishes on this dissertation!
4869147	Lack of background knowledge and often a reluctance to spend the needed time studying